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THE MIND OF THE MISSAL

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THE MIND OF THE MISSAL

BY

C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.

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"He used to say that the religions of the Jews and of the other Eastern races were like the hints of dawn and the clouds of daybreak before the sunrise of the Mass.... And you, what do you think of those things?"

MAURICE BARING:
The Coat without Seam

NEW YORK
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1929

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ARTHUR J. SCANLAN,
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DEDICATION

TO THE RT. REV. DR. H. W. CLEARY

BISHOP OF AUCKLAND

My dear Lord Bishop,

Among your many kindnesses I rank the permission to dedicate this book to you.

For years you have been showing me those kindnesses; and for long you have been good enough to invite me to Auckland. The Sydney Eucharistic Congress at last enabled me to accept your invitation.

You came all the way to Wellington to meet me, and you took endless trouble to show me the beauties of mountain and lake, of source and forest, in the North Island. Better still, you let me see much of its Catholic life, more beautiful than anything else; and the affection everywhere displayed towards yourself warmed my heart too, not least in the wonderful little village of Waihi, where I came into closer contact with members of the great Maori race than was elsewhere possible. I shall not forget their geniality, their courage, or their Catholic devotion, and indeed, how the Waihi Maoris chanted, at their weekday Mass, its structural prayers from the Missal.

After that, a moment came when we looked over, side by side, into the next world; but God did not will to have us there altogether yet. However, that makes an added link; and in fine as I am now actually in your house, what better could I do than offer you this

book, all of which I wrote on the *Rotorua* while sailing towards New Zealand.

I know how much you love children. I guess therefore what must be your grief if you ever have to hear a sentence like: "I've never been to Mass since I left school." You would grieve, too, if anyone, child, adolescent, or adult, failed in love, or even loyalty, towards the greatest Event that takes place on this our earth. This book will not be of use, I fear, to children, and indeed, may be of service to but few. Still, who knows, in a convent, in a school, or for this one or for that, it may with God's blessing be of help. Its one ambition is to reach Mass through the Missal. After all, as things are, no Missal, no Mass. I have then tried to explain why the Missal exists in the shape that it does; and I have tried to add a few notes on the Masses it actually contains. You will not find that each is described in exactly the same way or with the same fulness. Perhaps readers, who judge that the *method* of studying those Masses suits them, will become able to apply it for themselves more and more easily, and personal application of that sort is worth far more than print or anyone else's words. Anyhow, such as it is, please accept it.

In the story *Albert Alfred P.C.*, which you were kind enough to publish in *The Month*, I sent my affection to those New Zealand soldiers I had met during the war. Since I have been here, I have already received messages from some of them, containing the best of all possible news. Hence I need say no more than that this book must stand as an act of gratitude connected with many things, and you must believe me,

Yours with deep respect and affection,

C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.

INTRODUCTION

In writing this book, the only thing I have cared about is the Mass and those who offer it. The greatest event in any one day is the offering of Mass. Mass *is* that Act of Jesus Christ our Lord by which is supplied to the soul of each the Act accomplished once for all on Calvary. Yet to many it does not mean much. Many go to "hear Mass" only because ordered to under pain of sin. Very many cannot follow Mass when present at it. Hence the tremendous Act of God passes alongside of them almost unnoticed and quite unappreciated.

One way of avoiding this—though only one—is to be *interested* in the Mass as such, and in the Masses said each day. But these are found in the Missal. Therefore it is good to know the Missal, and to know *about* the Missal, and above all to share the "mind" of the Missal. For then you know that the Mind of the Church, which made the Missal, is also yours. Little by little the rich treasures of that Mind reveal themselves, and are taken possession of by your own mind, and become part of you in a way that they were not, when you merely read them in a book. *You* are increased and richer, and your whole activity is developed and intensified, and you *act* during Mass—you *offer* your Mass—you *"do this,"* as Our Lord bade—quite differently. Your tendency would now be to seek out Mass and to fly to it and to demand its celebration, rather than to shirk it or sit reluctantly through it.

THE MIND OF THE MISSAL

THE MIND OF THE MISSAL

PART I

(i)

When we "go to Mass," we are fulfilling the command of Christ, who, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat, this is My Body": and after He had similarly blessed and distributed the Chalice, He concluded: "*Do this* for a commemoration of Me."

Forthwith after our Lord's departure from this world His Christians began to obey this command. As to *procedure*, so to say, they had few enough rules—they only knew that the Apostles must take bread, and bless, and break, repeat the words that Christ had used and distribute that which was the Body and the Blood, the enduring Real Presence of their Lord, Communion with Whom was the source and invigoration of their life. Small wonder if they surrounded this nucleus with the manner of worship to which they were accustomed. The Temple at Jerusalem and the synagogues of Palestinian towns—and indeed of all the towns wherever there was a community of Jews large enough to worship together at all—provided them with models. The Scriptures were read aloud, and then explained: the Apostles themselves wrote letters which were similarly read and no doubt commented upon: psalms, and also rhythmic hymns were sung: prayers

were said, whether in direct worship of God, or in petition for all classes of the Christian folk. Alms were collected for the poor. Even ancient Hebrew words crossed over into Christian worship, and have endured amongst us—*Amen*, "Assuredly!"—*Hallelu-Jah* (Alleluia), "Praise ye Jehovah"—*Hosanna**—somewhat as later on a few Greek words (Kyrie eleison) will survive in the Roman Mass. Out of these elements—Readings, Commentaries and Exhortations, Singings, Prayers, Giving of Alms—was constructed all that first part of the Christian Worship-in-Common which dated substantially from ancient Israel, was continued by the Apostles and their successors, and survives in our Roman Mass up to the Gospel inclusively.

When as a non-Catholic I used sometimes to go to Mass, I was bewildered by the enormous acceleration that Mass seemed to take once the Gospel was over. No wonder. Everything up to the Gospel, inclusively, is what survives from a separate longdrawn rite that in itself was not *created* by Christ's action at the Last Supper at all. The Church's rule that even though you do not come in before the end of the Gospel (with Credo annexed, so to say), you can validly "hear Mass" by being present at the rest of the ceremony, is in keeping with this historical consideration.

For what followed the readings and so forth that we have mentioned, was, quite simply: some further prayers, the blessing of the bread and wine according to Christ's institution, again a few prayers that commemorated His death, and finally, Communion in the consecrated elements.

* This word, probably, is an abbreviation of "Save, then!"; but by the time it entered the Missal it was just a kind of cheer or cry of glory.

Very few of the writers of the first three centuries tell us in detail or consecutively of the way in which Mass was celebrated in their time: indeed, many of the prayers said during it were extempore, and their number and duration varied according to circumstances: but, first, the *type* of Christian worship remained unaltered—the two great parts of the ritual persisted, and of these the former was definitely the "Mass of the Catechumens," at which those "under instruction" only and not yet baptised were allowed to assist, and second, the part containing the Consecration and Communion was the "Mass of the Faithful." In this, certain phrases stereotyped themselves and became repeated by all who celebrated. For example, the word "*Eucharistia*" itself, which means *thanksgiving*, and was specially applied to the blessing uttered over the elements, became technical and ended as the name proper to the whole service. Phrases later to be fused in the *Gloria in Excelsis* are seen scattered in that very early document (A.D. 80-100) known as the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. The *Sanctus* too sends its echoes backwards, so to speak. The first letter of St. Clement, A.D. 98, makes it quite clear that already the outline of a liturgy existed and must be adhered to. St. Justin, about 150, gives a quite startlingly full account of the Mass of his day.

But it is no part of this book to trace in detail the development of our liturgy, and we merely affirm that in *structure* it undoubtedly dates from the time of the Apostles themselves, and very soon indeed its details crystallised themselves and we take upon our lips phrases spoken by our ancestors in the catacombs. Tertullian (about A.D. 200) has a clear hint even of the little introduction to the *Pater* as we say it during

Mass, and Cyprian (258) has the *Sursum Corda.* In fact, long before the "triumph" of the Church under Constantine, the liturgy had advanced far beyond a mere general "type"—even the details of its component parts were fixing themselves.

The varieties of liturgies developed round about the great patriarchates, in East and West. We who live in the West are concerned only with the latter. But even in the West there were two great sub-types—the rite of Rome and that called "Gallican," and once more, of these it is the former that matters most to us, who inherit far more from it than from anything else. Yet even the problems set by our present rite—to mention only one: the Kiss of Peace occurs in it just before the Communion, instead of at the beginning of the Mass of the faithful as it does everywhere else—are not to be discussed in this book.

The special Roman features are most of them already found in the "Sacramentary" called Gelasian, our earliest document of the kind, probably written in mid-sixth century, but of course far older as regards the elements which it consigns to writing. Indeed, not for the first time then, were the ritual prayers set down in writing, either upon parchment, or on the "diptychs," folding boards sheeted with wax, upon which the names of those to be prayed for were written.

The best document of this sort is the Gregorian Sacramentary, which was sent from Rome to Charlemagne who wanted to introduce the Roman rite into the further West. Sent actually by Pope Adrian I, its substance belongs certainly to the time of St. Gregory I (590-604) who, we know, collected the various prayers and rites that had hitherto been in use into

one volume; but, while he left out much, he changed very little indeed.

Perhaps the subtlest yet very deep-reaching change was due to the use of Latin instead of Greek for the ritual—this had begun about A.D. 250, though Greek survived till much later—for, with that change, necessarily came too a great change of spirit, as anyone can see when they compare Vergil with Homer or indeed any Latin writer when he is translating, so he thinks, from the Greek. Other structural changes may have occurred in the Canon itself during Gregory's time: none, probably, after him. But in the rest of the Mass not a few additions were made later on, such as the offertory prayers and the *Lavabo*, all of which are Gallican in source.

But again, it is the present Missal that concerns us, and not the several stages of its development. Enough to say that had you assisted at a Mass celebrated according to the First Roman Ordo of 770, you would have missed very little that you are now accustomed to, save certain elaborations of ritual like incensing priest or altar, ringing of bells, and elevation. By the 11th or 12th century, the Roman rite was normal in the West, save at Milan and Toledo, which still to-day preserve rites of their own at least in certain churches. In a word, I may say that those elements which survived or were imported from the East have a certain florid and rhetorical character, and those which are Gallican in origin have a kind of tender and mystical flavour, whereas the Roman work is as austere and almost hard and stripped of any ornament as are those vast walls and arches, bridges and aqueducts, that stand stark and bleak through the centuries in the Campagna of Rome. Happily, the austere element has

predominated in our Missal, because even the pseudo-classical renaissance, and the invasion of modern masses, have not dared to touch the Canon, nor most of the Sunday liturgy.

However, what did happen was the practice of saying Mass much oftener than had at first been usual. We read that Leo III (795-816) would say Mass so often as nine times a day! At any rate every priest was liable to want to say Mass daily or several times a day. Hence the protracted ritual, which had become normal, needed to be shortened. This is the origin of our Low Masses, so that High Mass is not a padded-out version of Low Mass, but Low Mass is an abbreviated High Mass—nay, High Mass itself consists but of the battered relics of the psalms, readings, and litanies which at first composed it.

The practice of a priest saying Mass without choir or assistants necessitated, too, the putting down in *one* book, of the *whole* ceremony, not merely those parts which the priest (as opposed, for example, to the deacon) needed to say. This was the origin of *Missals*, and these triumphed from the thirteenth century onwards. It was the habit of the priest's saying everything at Low Mass, which reacted upon High Mass, so that now the priest says in a low voice even those parts which the choir is singing, and which are really proper to it alone. This did not prevent a good many varieties in small points cropping up locally as time went on: the relative confusion that this occasioned, coupled with the absolute chaos introduced by Protestant prayer books of different kinds, led to the imposition by the Council of Trent, and Pius V in particular (1570), of a reformed and simplified Missal, of which further revisions have touched only the most trivial

details. All that has happened since Pius's day, is the composition of many new "Masses," some of which are well made, and in the spirit of the old ones, whereas others are verbose and have quite lost the terse and practical diction of the true Roman style.

Enough then has been said to show that our Missal represents in substance the most ancient and dignified rite of Rome, such as St. Gregory inherited from days more ancient still. It is far older, for example, than those local variations in England or elsewhere which were to be found between the middle ages and the reformation. There never was any such thing as an "English Use"; there is no means of *restoring*, in this land, anything older or purer than that Roman rite which we use.

I will now speak of the Ordinary and the Canon of the Mass—of the prayers that precede, accompany, and follow, the actual Sacrifice—and then, so briefly as I may, describe the Masses proper to Sundays and great Feasts.

(ii)

We have seen that Mass falls definitely into two parts—everything up to the Credo inclusive, and everything that follows it. To-day, even this first part falls into two clear divisions—what the priest says at the foot of the altar-steps, and what he says after he has mounted them.

(A)

The prayers now said at the foot of the altar are so definitely not part of the mediæval Mass even, that they were not fixed in their present place till the Missal of Pius V. They were part of the priest's private prep-

aration. Still, there they are to-day; and they are so beautiful that it is a thousand pities if we do not join in them, especially as the server, who represents the Faithful, does emphatically join in them.

The priest prefaces them by the mighty invocation: "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." We must not allow this, the most potent invocation and declaration, to become a mere formality. In ancient languages, the "name" is continually found standing in the sense of *person*. "Name" could just mean "individual," "person." But it also meant more. It meant the living, energising person. I advance then to Mass somehow in the person and the power of God, the Three in One. I, who am God's creature, God's child and son, go forward to this tremendous Act at His bidding, in His protection. I, who am Christ's Christian, go forth along with Him to do what He did, and for the purposes for which He did it. I, who alone might never turn my mind to such mighty things, or who might quail at the bare thought of undertaking them, am inspired to think of them, to desire them, and to obey the impulse that sends me forward to accomplish them. No one says: "Jesus is Lord" save in the power of the Spirit (Cor. xii, 3): no one goes forth upon a Christianising work, to carry over into *fact* what he says *about* Christ, save under the huge inspiration of that same Holy Spirit. Enveloped in God, Fathered, accompanied, interiorly driven on by God, I go to do the divinest work made possible to man. I proceed to offer Mass, then, in the Presence and the Power of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. We seal this magnificent proclamation by our "Assuredly!"—*Amen.*

Then the priest says, alternately with the server,

psalm 42. This psalm is really a continuation of psalm 41. In it, the psalmist sees himself surrounded by enemies and held exiled at a distance from God's house and its worship: his heart has almost failed him, but his trust *just* holds good in spite of all. I briefly paraphrase this first psalm:

Even as the hart panteth after the water-springs, so panteth my soul after Thee, O my God! My soul thirsteth after God, God the Strong, the Living—when shall I return and take my stand once more before my God? By day and by night my tears have been my bread, while all day long they said to me: "Where is now thy God?" I remembered those old days, and wept my heart out—how I led the people in procession —led them to God's House, with voice of joy and praise—with hymns of festival. Yet why art thou so sad, my soul? and why dost thou disquiet me? Hope thou in God, for still shall I give Him praise, the Hope that I gaze towards—yea, my God!" But the psalmist repeats that he is sad—from far off he strains his eyes towards the Holy Land, the Holy City; but all the tall billows of his unhappiness have swept over his head; the towering waves, the deep gulfs between them, roar their way around him. None the less, God bids him recall His mercies all day long, and in the night to sing praise to Him; and indeed, pray he *will*, to the God of his life, and to God his Rock he will cry out that He supports him, and cannot have forgotten him, even when enemies persecute him to death and jeeringly demand where has his God gone to? No, no! Why be so sad, my soul? O why dost thou disquiet me? Hope thou in God, for still will I give praise to Him, who is the Rescue unto whom I look, yea, who is my God!

After this tragic yet splendid prayer of an undefeated soul, the verses follow which are said at Mass.

Give verdict for me, God! Separate my cause from the race that is not holy—
From the man that is unjust and crafty rescue me!
For *Thou* art my God and my Strength—why dost Thou reject me?
Why must I needs go heavily, while the foe oppresseth me?
Send forth Thy light and Thy truth—'tis they do lead me,
'Tis they shall bring me home unto Thy holy Hill and to Thy dwelling.
Yea, I shall go in unto God's altar—
To the God who was the happiness of my youth.
And on the harp shall I sing thanks to Thee, O God, my God!
Why art thou sad, then, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?
Hope thou in God, for yet shall I sing Him thanks,
Who is the Hope I look for, and my God!

After all, what Christian is not surrounded by temptation, and what is worse, who has not his enemies within him? The priest prays, and we pray with him, to be delivered from *identification* with the world's false ideals, and its impious cheating promises, and even, with that lower self that we experience within us. I know that with *God* is Truth, and with Him is Light: in the past they have guided me—the priest remembers his vocation and his training: the Faithful, that God elected them for baptism, for confirmation, and for their first Communion—as in the past that Light and Truth have led me, so may they still lead me, right up to my home with God, high up to heaven —heaven, of which this altar whose steps in a moment I shall climb, is a true foretaste. Thus in my adult

years, and in old age, and for ever, I shall have joy in God, better even than the happiness of my innocence and childhood, and shall for ever give Him thanks that He has never failed me, but has saved me, and proved Himself indeed to be *my* God.

After the psalm, the *Gloria Patri* is sung—a Roman practice.*

And before and after the psalm is sung a short verse —"I will go in to the altar of God—to God who rejoiceth my youth"—called the Antiphon or "answering voice." This practice is said to have come from Antioch and to have been introduced by St. Ambrose (c. 380). At first it was sung by everyone after each verse of the psalm sung by the choir (as is still done during the *Venite* at Matins). It served not only to announce the tune to which the psalm was going to be sung, but gave people who did not know the psalm by heart something to answer throughout. The shortening process that has affected almost everything in Mass, brought it about that the Antiphon is sung only at the beginning and the end; and, in the Breviary, you will sometimes find that only its first word or two are sung. In practice, it now strikes as it were a keynote of thought—or sets a thought-current that can flow throughout the psalm.

The priest then reminds himself that "Our help is in the Name of the Lord"—that is, quite simply, in *God* —and the server takes this up, replying: "Who made heaven and earth." It echoes the idea of the psalm, and encourages the priest to make confession of sin to one who is no enemy, but friend and succourer.

* The second part of this "ascription" of Glory means: "As it was in the beginning, *so be it* now and for ever;" unless indeed it originally was an anti-Arian cry—"As He was in the beginning so is He now," etc., alluding to the Son.

He then bows, as though beneath the load of his offences, and acknowledges that he is a sinner. The server prays "May God the Almighty have mercy upon thee, and, dismissing thy sins, bring thee through to everlasting life," and the priest seals the prayer with his *Amen*. Then the server makes the same confession in the name of the Faithful, and the priest similarly prays adding the words: "May the Almighty and Merciful God grant you indulgence, absolution, and remission of all your sins." "Amen."

Notice the *social* quality of this *Confiteor*. Not only the double confession and prayer for absolution catch up the whole congregation into what starts as the priest's private self-humiliation, but, "sin" is confessed to be the concern of the whole universe. We confess that we have sinned, in the presence of God alone Almighty, and alone therefore our Creator, Preserver and our Judge. But also in the presence of that woman whose whole existence was summed up in the fact that she was God's handmaiden in the work of our Redemption, Mary "ever-virgin," unsullied by the least breath of sin, and the Mother of God made *man*: in the presence too, of St. Michael, whose name means "Who is like to God?" and who sums up in himself all the created world of spirits; of the Baptist, who sums up, for his part, all that old world of patriarchs and prophets during which God was preparing for this world of Christian grace that is ours: in the presence of Saints Peter and Paul, the two mighty princes of God's new people, the men who symbolise both great aspects of the Church, her divine authoritative governing-power, and her apostolic missionary zeal. We abase ourselves before these Apostles and the whole Church, of which we have shown ourselves the indo-

lent and even the rebellious children: before the Baptist, who might as it were have expected that in the Kingdom of Grace, at least, men would be loyal—and we have betrayed our trust: before that mighty spirit, Michael, whom we have as it were told that we prefer *other* things to God; and before Mary, Christ's Mother, because we who name ourselves Christians, have acted without love for Christ, without gratitude for That to which her whole life was dedicated. God, and the whole realms of nature and of grace, lie outspread before us, and in the presence of them all we abase ourselves, heaving on to our shoulders our own sins, the sins of all who are at this Mass, the sins of all Catholics, and of all the world. And after the trustful prayer for mercy alone do we dare once more to lift our heads, and proceed.

Even now the priest offers a few more words of humble entreaty: "O God, turn to us and give us life!"; "And Thy people shall be glad in Thee,"; "Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy"; "And grant us Thy salvation"; "O Lord, grant my prayer"; "And may my cry reach even unto Thee!"; "The Lord be with you"; "And with Thy spirit." "Let us pray." (A word on this last tiny aspiration later.)

The priest then mounts the altar steps, praying as he goes. "Take away from us, we entreat Thee, O Lord, our iniquities, that with pure mind we may be enabled to enter into the Holy of Holies." And, stooping to kiss the altar, he says: "We pray Thee, Lord, through the merits of Thy Saints, whose relics are here, and of all Saints, that Thou wouldst deign to pardon us all our sins."

In every Catholic altar is embedded a stone. In a sense, this stone *is* the altar. Now in this stone, sealed

within a tiny hollow, are relics of martyrs. Ages ago, in the catacombs, bodies of martyrs were carried down from the place of execution, and placed in a stone coffin, upon which was offered Mass—the Sacrifice of Christ over the Christian sacrificed. The Offerings of Christ and Christian mounted intertwined to God. That is the origin of this Catholic practice which carries us thus right back to the beginnings of our worship.

Henceforward begins the true "Mass of the Catechumens."

(B)

The "Mass of the Catechumens" begins with the "*Introit.*" This word means literally "He enters." Who? The celebrant. In early days, the entry and the exit of the celebrant were solemn and processional. Psalms were sung during them. When everything was ready for Mass, the choir struck up a psalm, during which the celebrant was fetched from his vesting-place and led to the altar. After a while, the "shortening process" we have alluded to reduced the entire psalm to a few verses, and then to one, so that the Introit became what we have now—an Antiphon, one verse of a psalm, the Gloria, and the Antiphon again. Relics of its original purpose are seen in our High Masses (and remember that High Mass was the normal: only little by little did the diminished edition of High Mass, which Low Mass is, come into use), when the choir begins forthwith to sing the Introit, long before the celebrant begins to repeat it himself. The fact that in a Low Mass there is no choir, so that it became the habit for the celebrant to recite himself what the choir would have sung had there been one, now has reacted

on High Masses, during which he says in a low voice even what the choir is singing, Introit, Gradual and the rest as we shall see. The reason that on Holy Saturday (and Whitsun Eve) there is no Introit is now obvious—the clergy were already present at the altar and needed not to come in at all, let alone have music sung during their entry. It is noticeable that the Vatican Gradual has reintroduced the original value of the Introit—it is not to be sung when the priest has already reached the altar, but while he is getting there—*accedente sacerdote ad altare.* That the Introit changes according to the Sunday or even Feasts, is characteristic of the Roman rite, which admits of these variations, whereas the Eastern rites apparently are unchanging.

The oldest Masses undoubtedly began with readings (for the Introit is, after all, as we saw, not so much the beginning of the Mass as the psalm accompanying the ministers on their way to the altar). After some time, a litany was prefixed, itself prefaced by many repetitions of the Greek words *Kyrie eleison—Christe eleison*: Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! It came from the East, where the Greek prayer, again and again repeated, had made itself familiar even to Western ears. But once more, the litany proved to be too long. St. Gregory I, says that on weekdays the petitions were left out, and the people were asked to concentrate on the cries for mercy alone: soon enough, the petitions were omitted even upon Sundays. As for the mercy-cries, their number was at first quite indefinite—they went on till the celebrant gave a sign for them to cease. When they were fixed to nine, it was easy to see in them a triple invocation addressed to each of the Three Persons of the Trinity.

The *Gloria in Excelsis* is in its due place after the Kyrie, for it was the regular custom to follow a litany by a hymn. The people who had been merely answering invocations experienced the need of expanding their lungs. (There is a certain charm in the hints up and down the Missal of the eagerness people felt to participate in the ceremonies: they "desire to carry these candles in state in their hands and to praise Thee by singing" (Purification): such is the spirit of the Palm Sunday procession: and the *Exultet* insists that the vaults of the great basilicas are to resound with the loud acclamations of the Faithful.) It is quite possible that the first words of the *Gloria* may have been very early ordered to be sung on Christmas day; and again, that St. Hilary of Poitiers (d. 366) translated the rest, when in exile in the east, from some oriental rhythmic hymn, and sang the two parts together in the west. Gradually the *Gloria* settled down into its present form, and became popular on Sundays or feasts, whenever there was time for it. Its first phrases are addressed to the Eternal Father, the second group to the Son, and only the last small sentence hymns the Holy Ghost. The charm of the words: "We give Thee thanks for Thy great Glory" has often been commented on. We are glad and grateful that God is so glorious and so beautiful, and will tell Him so and feel almost as if He were it for our sakes. At least it is that we might appreciate and enjoy for ever that most lovely vision that we were created. But I would ask whether God's "great Glory" may not mean His Son, our Lord. "Glory" has been defined: "A clear knowledge together with praise." The Son is the perfect Knowledge of the Father, and from Him proceeds that Holy Spirit who is His perfect love

and praise. The Son is the e-radiation, the refulgence, of the Father's glory—He *is* that Glory in as much as it shines forth from Him, Light from a fount of Light. Hence He *is* the Glory that, "in the highest," in heaven, is given ever to our God, and His perfect praise. With such thoughts we may occupy ourselves during the familiar hymn.

After the *Gloria*, and before the prayers, the priest turns to the people saying: "The Lord be with you," and they answer: "And with thy spirit" (this simply means: "with thee"). I will say more about this salutation below, here merely marking how before the priest turns his back to the altar, he kisses it out of affectionate respect. Each of these tiny incidents has its value.

Now come the *Collects*. *Collecta* is degenerate Latin for *Collectio* (cf. *missa* for *missio*: infra p. 48) and means gathering. In Rome, people "gathered" at some church and went in procession to another one: either at the start, or the finish, or both, a prayer was said "At (*i.e.*, at the moment of) the gathering." Another possible explanation is this. Instead of the *Oremus*, Let us pray, with which alone the Collects are now prefaced, quite possibly (as still on Good Friday and when the Pope or the King is prayed for) the intention for which the prayer was offered was announced. "Let us pray for sailors, for prisoners, for miners," etc. The people were then bidden "Kneel down." They knelt, and after a space of private prayer, they were bidden rise. Plenty of examples of this survive in our own Missal, where the words *Flectamus Genua* are used, though now the word *Levate*—"rise up,"—follows immediately, even in the long "litany" of Good Friday. When then the people had

prostrated themselves for a sufficient time in private prayer, they were bidden rise, and the priest "collected" their personal prayers into one official general formula, so to say. The more ancient collects are of an austere and naked beauty, quite unlike modern ones—in fact, the art of writing liturgical Latin seems to be as lost as making mediæval glass is. Most of our Sunday collects may indeed date so far back as Pope Damasus (366-384), a master of terse Latinity. The structure of a proper Collect is as follows: An invocation of the Name of God is followed by the statement of some reason for our praying with good hope to Him, and then by the petition, short, balanced, and straight to the point. The sonorous conclusion, "Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who, etc.," *Christianises* the whole prayer. Instances of such collects will be found in plenty in the second part of this book; there is in them no synopsis of a Saint's life: no multiplication of clauses nor parentheses; no sentimentalism. They provide the most perfect prayer imaginable for summing up one's meditations, and themselves afford material for many a meditation.

Readings belonged to the essence of the oldest cult. At first they continued so long as seemed suitable—the celebrant made a sign when it was time to stop. They might, too, be very numerous, as they still are on certain days in our calendar—ember days and vigils. In the concrete, they settled down as a rule to three—from prophet, from epistle, and (always) from Gospel. Finally, we have come down to what may be called Gospel, and non-Gospel, whatever be the source of the latter. It is hopeless to try to detect (save on special feasts) why such and such a reading is assigned by our rite. Nay, it is sometimes hard to see even why a

"reading" begins or ends where it does, especially when it comes from St. Paul. An "epistle" sometimes begins or ends in the middle of a sentence, or at least in the middle of a thought. None the less, it seems very much our duty to make what we can out of the "epistles," and for this, our best method is to know St. Paul's writings, at any rate, very well, so that we either can recall the general argument of which we are reading part, or may at least prepare our Mass beforehand and, when doing so, look up St. Paul's letters and refresh our memory.

Immediately after our "epistle" comes the *Gradual*. This started by being the psalm which was sung, to break the monotony, between the readings. It was called "Gradual," or "step-psalm," because it was sung from the steps of the pulpit from which the epistle had been chanted, or even from the steps of the altar. The way which this psalm was at first sung was "responsorial"—after the choir or cantor had sung one verse, the people repeated the last phrase, or uttered cries like Alleluia. After no long while, the Gradual psalm got shortened down like everything else, and all we now have is a verse of a psalm or some other sentence, followed by Alleluias between which another verse of some sort has been interposed. Naturally here as elsewhere the Alleluia becomes more prominent at Easter: in Lent and on some fast-days the Alleluia-chant either disappears or is replaced by a *Tract*. The Tract, like the Alleluia-chant, corresponds to the hymn sung after the second "reading." It is called "tract," not because it was "long-drawn" in a melancholy way, but because it was sung "in uno tractu"—*tout d'un trait*, as you would say in French—without responses or other interruptions from the people.

The *Sequences* that are sung—five in all, since Pius V abolished a host of others—after the Gradual and the Alleluia-chant, had a curious origin. The last syllable of the Alleluia used to be enormously drawn out, expressive of the unlimited joy of the Christian heart. This was called the Jubilus. In the tenth century, however, music was still written without lines, and the people were expected to remember the tune by heart. This was, however, very difficult. A French monk formed the habit of writing words fitted to the notes of these tunes, so as to help his memory; another, Notker of St. Gall (c. 900), developed this plan and wrote words to fit all the important Alleluias of the year when thus long-drawn-out into a jubilus. His poems proved so popular, that they were actually sung in church *instead* of the mere prolongation of the *a* that ends Alleluia, though at first out of respect, so to speak, for that *a*, each line had to end in that vowel. These versifications retained a more popular character than the liturgical hymns, and admitted rhyme, dramatic dialogue, and even mixtures of the vernacular with Latin and so forth, and finally, devout hymns were written which had nothing to do with filling out the manifold *a*-sounds but existed independently and were sung after the Gradual—whence probably their name Sequences—"followings." The five superb examples that subsist in our Missal are: Veni Sancte Spiritus; Dies Irae; Victimae Paschali; Stabat Mater, and Lauda Sion. We may be grateful indeed for having these, and perhaps for having no others.

Little need be said about the remaining "reading"—that of the *Gospel*. Sometimes it was considered so holy that catechumens were turned out of the church beforehand. Then, wisely, they were retained to hear,

as St. Cyprian called it, "the Gospel that fashions martyrs." The special sanctity of the Gospel was emphasised by the magnificently illuminated parchments that contained it, by the ceremonies—lights and incense—that gradually accompanied the moving about of the book, and by the attitude taken by those who listened—they stood, as servants, to receive the orders of their masters, and later, knights would draw their swords, as being ready to defend the Faith. We still stand, and sign Christ's Cross upon our forehead, to show that we believe, on our lips, to show that we will speak only according to His Word, and on our hearts, to show that we have love for it. The proclamation of the Gospel was entrusted, in time, to the deacon: before venturing upon it, he now kneels and prays—"Cleanse my heart, O Lord, and my lips, who didst cleanse the lips of the prophet Isaias with a burning coal: so by Thy free mercy deign Thou me to cleanse, that I may find strength worthily to proclaim Thy holy Gospel"; He asks the priest's blessing, who gives it in the form: "The Lord be in thy heart and upon thy lips, that worthily and properly thou mayest proclaim His Gospel." Just as the reader of the former readings stood on the south side of the church, turning to the people, so the deacon read the Gospel from a pulpit on the north side, looking across the church southwards, for thus was he heard best. The reducing of the normal High Mass to Low has had a double and curious effect. First, at Low Mass the celebrant reads everything, and does not turn to the people at all for the epistle: however, when the moment for reading the Gospel comes, the ancient position of the deacon in his pulpit on the north side is at least responsible for the carrying of the book from one side of the altar to the

other, and even, for the priest's standing slightly edgeways, as though turning so far towards the people as, given the position of the book upon the altar, he can. But by reaction, at a High Mass nowadays the reader (*i.e.*, to-day, the sub-deacon, who acquired a sort of right over the epistle in view of the deacon's duty in regard of the gospel) stands with his back to the people, like the celebrant; and the deacon, though going to the north side, faces likewise north, because so does the celebrant at that Low Mass of ours which has become normal for *us*.

As for the *Creed*, which on more solemn occasions now follows the Gospel, its introduction into the Roman Mass was quite late—perhaps not till 1014. Creeds were composed primarily for use at baptisms. They do not contain the whole faith, and often emphasise some particular point which was in dispute when they were composed. Thus the Nicene creed said at Mass is anti-Arian, and insists that the Son is Son of God, sole-begotten, and born of the Father before all time—God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God; begotten, not made; of one substance with the Father; through Him all things were made. It is worth attending to the magnificent title *Vivificans*—"who maketh alive"—given to the Holy Ghost, and the insistence on His "speaking through the prophets."* But, after-thought or no, we may be glad that this part of the Mass sums itself up in our wholehearted protestation that we believe in what we have heard—that the Faith that we have been taught indeed is ours.

* This is not the place to discuss the point whether (as I confess myself not disinclined to think) *Communio Sanctorum* may not mean: Participation in the Holy Things, that is, the Eucharist.

Thus then the first half of the Mass—the Mass of the Catechumens—comes to an end. No one, Catholic or not, is now forced to leave the church at this point: but as from this point, Catholics must be present at Mass, if they are to fulfil their obligation.

(iii)

Directly the first "part" of Mass was over, the Faithful began the true Mass by a long litany of prayers. In the whole of our liturgy, the only place where this survives is the morning service of Good Friday. Still, in the Mass of every day, these intercessions have left one pitiful little trace—the *Oremus*—"Let us pray," which the priest says immediately after the salutation *Dominus Vobiscum* which inaugurates this part of the Mass—an *Oremus* which he does not follow up with any such prayers; literally, the stump left behind after the amputation!

The *Offertory* follows. It consisted of the bringing to the altar of the bread and wine that are to serve for consecration. In other liturgies than ours, this is prepared beforehand: the Roman rite does what St. Justin speaks of—bread and wine are *brought* now to the celebrant. The faithful carried up to the altar both loaves and skins of wine: of these, enough was set aside for the Sacrifice; the rest was devoted to the poor. Alone at Milan, this admirably symbolic act survives: two old men and two old women carry up to the priest the bread and the wine and water. Perhaps the thought that these particular offerings are no more possible or even necessary, but once *were* made, may ennoble for our feeling the giving of coins, which is all we now can do at this point of Mass.

While all this was happening, the choir sang. This

survives in the offertory chant, which varies like the Introit, the Gradual, and so much else, according to the season. Now that Low Mass is normal, the priest reads the little phrase. Only in Requiems can you detect that this "offertory-chant" *was* a full chant, a psalm with antiphons.

Characteristically, perhaps, the exquisite impassioned and personal prayers that now accompany the offering of the bread and wine are non-Roman and late, and not properly fixed till the revision of Pius V. When the priest offers the bread, he says:

> "Accept, O Holy Father, Almighty, Eternal God, this unblemished Offering, that I Thine unworthy servant offer to Thee, my true and living God, on behalf of my innumerable sins, offences, and negligences, and for all who are standing round, and also for all believing Christians living and dead, that for me and for them it may be operative unto salvation, even eternal life, Amen."

The one bread, formed of many grains, is offered on behalf of that whole Church of Christ, formed of many members—one Body, made of so many myriads of living cells.

At all times, our ancestors, the Jews included, mixed a little water with their wine. The priest now blesses the water to be mingled in the Chalice.

> "O God, who didst wonderfully fashion the dignity of human nature and still more wonderfully re-fashion it, grant, that by the mystery of this wine and water, we may be made partakers in His divinity who in our humanity did not disdain to share."

Gladly we acknowledge that this glorious prayer is Roman in its origin. What is not contained in it? Our first creation according to nature; our new creation in grace; the Incarnation, wherein our weak humanity

was joined to God's own nature so that our Lord was both true man, and true God; our own union too, with Him, so that we with Him make one Body, and share that glory which is His, our Beatific Vision of His Father. You may, too, if you like reflect that into one great Chalice we place the whole of our so mingled natures, characters, and lives. All that is good in us, all that is bad: all that we hope and fear; all that we could not tell, all that we do not guess. This into one Cup we place, and beg God to transubstantiate it, and to make it into a Chalice that *saves*—make even our poor lives salvific.

> "We offer to Thee," says the priest, "the Chalice of Salvation, entreating Thy mercy that, in the sight of Thy divine Majesty, it may ascend with fragrant sweetness for our own and the whole world's salvation."

The priest here uses the plural, because strictly speaking, the deacon is associated with him in the offering of the Chalice, as in all (at first) that concerned It; and still at High Mass, the deacon puts his hand along with the priest's when the Chalice, as now, is lifted towards God.

> "In the spirit of humility and with a contrite heart," he continues, "may we be accepted by Thee, O Lord; and so may our sacrifice be made in Thy sight to-day, that it may please Thee, O Lord God. Come, O Sanctifier, Almighty, Eternal God, and bless this sacrifice, prepared for Thy Holy Name."

This last invocation is addressed (as other versions of the prayer make clear) to the Holy Ghost, and thus the entire Trinity is associated with the preparing of what shall become the Acceptable Gift. The priest then goes to the side to wash his hands. After handling so much bread and so many wine-skins, he quite lit-

erally needed some such cleansing: also, in view of that which so soon he must touch, this symbolical purification is well in place. He recites verses 6-12 of psalm xxv.

"I will wash my hands among the innocent,
And will make procession round Thine altar, Lord,
To hear the voice of praise,
And tell of all Thy wonders.
Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy House,
And the place where Thy glory dwelleth.
Destroy not my life, O God, among the impious,
Nor slay me along with the blood-guilty,
Whose hands are full of wickedness,
Their right hand filled with bribes.
But I do walk in innocence,
Rescue me, pity me.
My feet stand in the straight path,
And in the assemblies will I praise Thee.
Glory be to the Father, etc."

The psalm is chosen chiefly for its first and last verses; but there is a kind of new Confiteor even in its humble prayer that I may not be guilty of any sin. Then the priest sums up the offering in a prayer again not fixed to this place till 1570.

Accept, O Holy Trinity, this Oblation, which we offer to Thee in memory of the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ, our Lord; and to the honour of Blessed Mary Ever-Virgin, of blessed John the Baptist and of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and of these, and of all the Saints, that it may prove honourable for them, and salvation to ourselves, and that they may condescend to intercede for us in heaven, whose commemoration we celebrate upon earth, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Who are "*these*" Saints? Probably those whose relics are enshrined in the altar-stone: possibly the

Saint to whom the church is dedicated, or whose feast is kept to-day.

The *Orate Fratres* sums up and seals all this. The priest begs his brethren to pray that "your and my sacrifice may prove acceptable in the eyes of God, the Father Almighty." And the minister's reply: "May the Lord accept the sacrifice at thy hands, to the praise and glory of His Name, and also for our own use and that of His entire Holy Church."

Other prayers then follow, concerning the offered gifts, said in a low voice, and therefore called *Secret*. All these prayers are thus said because the offertory chant is conceived as still going on; and presumably even the *Orate Fratres* is addressed primarily to the ministers who are standing quite close to the priest. Not but what we should profit by its meaning. It insists that the Sacrifice about to be offered is not a private affair of the celebrant. He is the ordained priest—ordained to trans-substantiate—to be the instrumental cause of that marvel. The actual Giver of the Gift is, first, Christ Himself; then, all of us who are incorporate with Him.

Some time ago, the Holy Father, addressing a pilgrimage of Boy Scouts who had assisted at his Mass, spoke of "that sacrifice which you along with me have offered, as indeed you have." He was making no sentimental or half-meant statement: but expressing the very reality of the Mass.

It is perfectly true that, as Dr. Fortescue reminds us, the Preface is part of the Canon, or rather was, for now the Canon begins quite definitely after it. The Preface is part of that great Prayer of Thanksgiving which enshrines in its heart the Narrative of the Institution of the Eucharist. But since after all we use

Mass as it now is said, and the Missals that we possess, there can be no harm in treating the Preface as indeed it is—a transitional prayer, organically connected both with the last words of the silent prayers, and with the first of the Canon.

When the offertory chant ceased, the celebrant raised his voice and sang the last words of his prayer:

"For ever and ever." "Amen."
"Hold high your hearts!" "We are holding them up to the Lord."
"Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God." "Due and just is that!"

In this little dialogue, most ancient fragments of eucharistic worship are to be found. "*Sursum corda*" and its reply reach back, it well may be, to the earliest days of all, long before the liturgies began to separate into eastern and western. The command to "give thanks" again reaches right back to the days when the Eucharist implied primarily its essential content—Thanksgiving. At this point, then, there used to be rehearsed an enormous list of God's benefits to man, including episodes from immemorial Jewish history, and of most recent occurrence, such as deliverance from a siege. These were gradually dropped out, but it is owing to their old-time presence that we continue "and *therefore* with Angels" and the following words. Along with the very brief relics of the old preface, however, are now inserted references to certain feasts, when these are in place. Normally the preface runs:—

"Due indeed is it and just, right and for our weal, that we to Thee at all times and in all places should give thanks, O Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, through Christ our Lord, through whom the Angels praise Thy Majesty, the Dominations do adore it, the Powers

before it tremble. The heavens and the spirits thereof, and the blissful Seraphim, in united exultation do join in hymning it. That along with them our voices too, Thou wouldst bid to be admitted, we do pray, and with suppliant gratitude do sing—Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of Armies; full are the heavens and the earth of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed be He who is coming in the Name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest.'

The special Prefaces are these, containing some of the most magnificent passages of the entire Missal:

For Christmas, Corpus Christi, and certain other feasts:

"Due indeed is it . . . to give thanks to Thee, Eternal God, because through the mystery of the Word made Flesh, a new radiance of Thy splendour hath shone on our mind's eyes; so that while we do recognise our God made visible, through Him into the love of the Invisible we be swept. And *therefore* with angels and archangels, with Thrones and Dominations, and with all the battalions of the heavenly host, we chant Thy glory's hymn, endlessly singing *Sanctus*. . ."

(The other special sentences proper to Christmas, or to other feasts, are alluded to below.)

For the Epiphany (one of the very oldest feasts of the Church, and still possessing an Octave more highly privileged than that of Christmas):

"Because, when Thy Sole-Begotten was made manifest in our mortal flesh, with the new light of His own Immortality did He refashion us. And therefore, etc."

In Lent:

"(Eternal God), who through bodily fasting dost restrain our faults, uplift the mind, lavish upon us virtue,

and its rewards, through Christ our Lord, through whom, etc."

In Passion-tide and on feasts of the S. Heart, the Cross, the Precious Blood, etc.:

"(Eternal God), who didst establish in the wood of the Cross the salvation of our human race, that whence Death found its origin, thence Life might rise once more, and that he who through a tree was conqueror, by the Tree might himself be conquered, through Christ, etc."

At Easter:

"Due indeed is it and just, right and for our weal, Thee, Lord, Thee at all times to praise, but on this day beyond all others more exultantly, when Christ our Pasch was sacrificed for us. For He, He is the true Lamb, who took away the sins of the world, who by dying did destroy our death, and by rising did renew our life. And therefore. . ."

At Ascensiontide:

"(Eternal God), through Christ our Lord, who after His resurrection did manifestly appear to all His disciples, and was, while they watched, lifted up to heaven, that He might cause us to be made to share in His own divinity. And therefore. . ."

At Pentecost:

"(Through Christ our Lord) who, ascending above all heavens, and taking His seat at Thy right hand, poured forth (to-day) the promised Spirit upon the Sons of Adoption. Wherefore, beneath this torrent of joys, all people throughout the whole world do exult, and with them too the celestial Powers, and the Angelic Spirits, singing together Thy glory's hymn, etc."

On the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity and on all Sundays when there is no feast:

"(Eternal God), who, with Thy Sole-Begotten Son,

and the Holy Spirit, art One God, One Lord—not in the one-ness of a solitary Person, but in the One substance of a Trinity. For that which, at Thy revelation, we believe touching Thine own Glory, that too about Thy Son, that too about the Holy Spirit, without difference or divergence we do hold; so that in the acknowledging the true, eternal Godhead, we must adore each several Person, and yet the Unity of Substance, and a Co-Equal Majesty. It do the Angels praise, and the Archangels, the Cherubim and the Seraphim, who cease not ever to cry out, singing with one voice. . ."

On Feasts of Our Lady:

"(Eternal God), and Thee in the (Assumption or whatever the feast may be) of Blessed Mary ever Virgin, to join in praising, to bless, and to proclaim. She by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit did not only conceive Thy Sole-Begotten but, while the glory of her virginity endured, gave forth to the world Eternal Light, Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whom etc. . ."

On the Feast of St. Joseph:

"(Eternal God), and Thee for the Feast of Blessed Joseph with due panegyric to magnify, thank and proclaim. He, for that he was a righteous man, was given by Thee to the Virgin Mother of God to be her Spouse, and, as Servant faithful and prudent, was set over Thy Family, that like a true father, he might guard Thy Sole-Begotten, conceived by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, even Jesus Christ our Lord."

On Feasts of Apostles:

"Due indeed is it and just. . . Thee, Lord, suppliantly to entreat that Thou, the Eternal Shepherd, wouldst not desert Thy flock, but through Thy blessed Apostles wouldst constantly protect and guard it, that so by the selfsame Rulers it be governed, whom, as the Vice-Regents of Thy work, Thou didst set over it to be its pastors. And therefore. . ."

In Masses for the Dead:

"(Eternal God), through Christ our Lord, in Whose person a hope of happy resurrection hath shone forth for us, that we, whom the inevitable doom of death doth sadden, may be consoled by the promise of destined immortality. Yea, for Thy faithful, Lord, life is but changed, not ended; and when the house of this their earthly tarrying is dissolved, an eternal mansion in the heavens standeth ready. And therefore. . ."

Such are these prose-poems, for they are nothing short of that. They are echoes of that great Sanctus-hymn that Isaias heard around Jehovah's throne, and that St. John, too, heard ever circling round God's inaccessible glory in the highest. Both Prophet and Apostle saw how all nature, from the inanimate things of earth through all the heavenly hierarchies, and men, joined in that hymn, and we men still to-day unite ourselves, therefore, with the hosts of heaven to glorify our King. It is good that the Hebrew *Sabaoth*—hosts, armies, whereby we at least mean the whole of the celestial creation, and Hosanna, which by Christian times was a shout of triumph, should remind us how the whole history of God's dealings with His men pours forward into the Sanctus of our Mass. When our poor human hymn enters the divine presence, which is thunderous with the praise of all those mighty spirits to whom St. Paul gives vague and magnificent titles, at least we find there, too, all our fellow humans who, throughout the ages, have given, and are giving, glory to their God and ours.

(iv)

An immense amount might be written about the problems presented by our Canon, and about how it reached its present shape. I think that the whole of

this had best be left to one side. Enough to say that *Canon* means Rule or Norm, and may be so-called because, once fixed, it never has been, nor may be, changed, or because it is regarded by the Church as the proper way, within any particular rite, of consecrating. Strictly speaking it begins with that prayer of Thanksgiving now called the Preface, and ends just before the Pater Noster. We, however, regard it as continuing till after the Communion, which does, confessedly, conclude the Sacrifice. In its present condition, it proceeds as follows:

"Thee, therefore * Father most merciful, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, suppliantly we beseech and beg that Thou wouldst take and accept and bless these Gifts, these Offerings, this holy unpolluted Sacrifice, which first and foremost, we offer Thee on behalf of Thy holy Catholic Church, which do Thou deign to guard in peace and unity throughout the world, together with Thy servant, our Pope N., and our Bishop N., and all the Faithful, even the believers in the Catholic and Apostolic Faith. Be mindful, Lord of Thy servants, men and women, N.N. [he prays for a space for those whose names he wishes especially to recall to God, and then stretches his hands wide again and continues] . . . and of all who are here present, whose faith is known to Thee, and known is their devotion—all they for whom we are offering to Thee, or who are offering to Thee, this Sacrifice of Praise, on their own behalf, and on that of all

* This very word "therefore" marks a dislocation. No precise *reason* has been given for anything that follows. Personally, I like to see that the great accumulation of thoughts that the Mass so far has provided, itself provides us with the conviction that nothing short of the Self-Offering of Christ, and of ourselves *in Him*, can cope with so vast a mass of needs and obligations. No other response to the greatness and goodness of God, no other merits nor prayers, save His, can compete with the sins of the world, the necessities of the world, the magnificence of God. *Therefore* to whom should we go, if not to Him, who, man like ourselves, can yet offer the adequate Worship, Expiation, Gratitude, and Intercession to the Father? *Therefore* we hasten forward to the Consecration.

who are theirs—for the redemption of their souls, for the hope of salvation, and of security—they who to Thee are offering their homage, to Thee, O God, Eternal, Living, True.

Catholics will not forget how real is their duty to pray for their priests and hierarchy, that they may fulfil as they should their enormous task; and again, that we should seldom come to offer Mass without having a very real "intention" of doing so for some definite purpose, for thus the mind finds it immensely easier to concentrate upon the work that, in the Mass, we are accomplishing.

In communion with, and venerating the memory of the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ before all others: but also of Thy blessed apostles and martyrs—Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude, Linus, Cletus, Clement, Systus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Laurence Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian, and of all Thy Saints, to whose merits and prayers do Thou grant that in all things we be protected, guarded, helped by Thee, Through Christ our Lord, Amen.*

*The insertions into the Canon, on special feasts, are these:—

Christmas. "In communion with, and celebrating the most sacred day (or "night" at midnight Mass) when the inviolate virginity of Blessed Mary gave forth to this world a Saviour. . .

Epiphany. "In communion with, and celebrating the most sacred day whereon Thy Sole-Begotten, with Thee in Thy glory co-eternal, was manifested visibly and corporally in the reality of our flesh. . ."

Easter. "In communion, etc. . . day of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh. . ." And below: "This Oblation, therefore, . . . which we offer to Thee for these too whom Thou hast deigned to regenerate by water and the Holy Spirit, granting them remission of all their sins. . ."

Ascension. "Most holy day, whereon our Lord, Thy Sole-Begotten Son, set down at the right hand of Thy Glory the substance of our frailty united to Himself. . ."

Pentecost. "Most holy day of Pentecost, whereon the Holy Spirit appeared to the Apostles in innumerable tongues . . ." and below

Splendidly the Church links up our life and worship with that of the triumphant Church in heaven. You have here twelve apostles (St. Matthias is left over till the second list of those to be commemorated), and twelve martyrs, all of them Roman save St. Cyprian, or at least much venerated at Rome.†

He then stretches out his hands over the offerings.

"We therefore beg Thee, Lord, graciously to accept this offering made by us Thy servants, but also by all Thy family, and to order our days in Thy peace, and to bid us to be snatched from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the flock of Thine elect through Christ our Lord. This offering, then, O God, do Thou deign to make utterly blessed, appropriated, acknowledged, registered—so that it may become for us the Body and the Blood of Thy most dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord."

In the first part of this prayer, you would say that the priest has become so conscious of the hugeness of his imminent Act, that he lets everything go to one side save the vast thoughts of eternal loss, eternal salvation, and in an all-but clumsy, roughened style, drops everything save this almost grim petition to His God. In the second part, certainly in the Roman spirit he becomes almost a legalist. Some of the words are scriptural; yet the feeling you derive is, that he wishes God to recognise that once Jesus Christ thus offers Himself, there is simply nothing to be done *but* to recognise and

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the Quam Oblationem is expanded as on Easter Sunday, those days being the only ones on which Baptism was habitually and solemnly administered.

† St. Chrysogonus is a stranger: he has won entry into this list only by accidents too complicated to discuss: St. Cyprian is admitted with real generosity: in many ways he quarrelled with Rome, and in certain points of theology was at one time on the wrong side: it would be well to learn just sufficient about each of these Saints to invest his name with a special "personality," and the same for the Saints who occur in the second list below.

accept the offering as final—once the receipt of the Gift is sealed, all the whole future is secure. Then he proceeds to the commemoration of the Institution.

> "Who on the day before He suffered, took bread into His holy and worshipful hands, and raised His eyes to heaven unto Thee, God, His Almighty Father, and to Thee giving thanks He blessed it, brake it, and gave it to His disciples saying: Take and eat ye all from This. This is My Body. Similarly after they had supped, taking this glorious chalice too into His holy worshipful hands, again He gave thanks to Thee and blessed and gave to His disciples, saying: Take, and drink from it all of you, for this is the Chalice of My Blood, of the new and eternal Covenant, the Mystery of Faith, which for you and for many shall be poured forth unto the remission of sins. Whensoever you shall do these things, you will be doing it unto a memorial of Me."

Little enough need be said concerning these solemn moments. It is strange that the words "and eternal," and, "mystery of faith" should have been able to find their way into the Scriptural narrative. "And eternal" is not too hard to understand. The very mention that *this* Covenant is a new one, implies that in some sense at least the old one had passed away and was being superseded. The new one, however, shall indeed last for ever. Beyond the Christian Gift, nothing remains. Expressions like "Mystery of the Gospels," "Mystery of Faith," are very early, and in the Apocalypse, the World-Wanton has prefixed to her name "A Mystery," *i.e.*, a meaningful symbol. Very reasonably indeed is the Blessed Sacrament to be thought of as the supreme Sign of our Faith, a Sign containing what it signifies, a sign, moreover, whose significance is grasped wholly by Faith and totally eludes our sight. Still, how did the phrase find an entrance here? No one can tell.

Perhaps there was a very ancient, extra-scriptural tradition about it. Perhaps it was a liturgical exclamation made by others than the priest. It may have been the private and profound sentiment of some pontiff who fixed this part of the Canon. At any rate, we may admire the identification of our sacrifice of to-day with the sacrifice made at the Last Supper, implied in the words that Christ took "*this* glorious Cup" into His hands. In the matter of that Supper, of Calvary, and of Mass, time vanishes, and the Action is one and the selfsame throughout. The Cenacle, Calvary and our churches, coincide. After the Consecration he continues—

> "Wherefore, O Lord, both we Thy servants and also Thy chosen people being mindful of the so blessed Passion of the same Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, and further of His Resurrection from the dead, and of His glorious Ascension into heaven, offer to Thine august Majesty, from what Thou hast Thyself given and granted, a Sacrifice that is pure, that is holy, that is unstained—the holy Bread of eternal life, and the Chalice of salvation everlasting. And over these do Thou deign to look down with serene eyes and kind, and regard them as accepted, even as Thou didst deign to hold accepted the gifts of Thy righteous servant Abel, and the sacrifice of our Patriarch Abraham, and the holy sacrifice, the offering unblemished that Thy high priest Melchisedech did offer Thee. Suppliantly we implore Thee, Almighty God, bid Thou these things to be carried by the hands of Thy holy angel up to Thine altar on high, to be in the sight of Thy divine Majesty, that as many soever as, by participating in this Altar, shall have received the most holy Body and Blood of Thy Son, may be all of us filled full with every heavenly blessing and grace, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen."

I suppose one may safely say that no modern Catholic, bidden to write a Canon for the Mass, would have

composed just such a prayer. He might well not have mentioned those heroes of the Old Testament at all. But he would therein have erred. God has not abolished His ancient dispensation, because He has given a new revelation. Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil. God's supernatural activity in His world has been continuous, and we do well to remember it, and link ourselves up with all our spiritual past, and to give thanks for all of it. And perhaps, not least for the linking of those three names—Abel, who stands at the head of the whole world's history of sacrifice; Abraham, Father of the Chosen People "to whom were entrusted the oracles of God," and who, mysteriously and agonisingly summoned (it seemed to him) to offer his own son in sacrifice, spoke to the boy those tremendous words: "God will provide a Lamb, my son"; and Melchizedech, to whom not even Revelation was confided, but whose offering, even so, pleased God. But we would certainly not have asked that the Sacrifice of the Altar should be "carried up" to the heavenly altar by angelic hands. It has no need thus to be carried up, for God to see it. Still less is there any question of God's not accepting our Gift, and having to be asked to do so. You must remember that, sober though the Roman rite may be, it has in it a strong element of the dramatic which you see especially maybe, in the Mass of Requiem, during the Gradual, where you would suppose from the mere words that the fate of the dead man's soul was precarious and that he needed protection from diabolic onslaughts and the perils of his road from earth into the next world; or in the Masses of Advent and of Christmas, when Christ seems yet to be born; and of course in the services of Holy Week, and on those many occasions when some

event, e.g. in our Lord's life is spoken of as occurring "to-day" because it is to-day commemorated. Here, too, along with the essential dogma and its theology—the doctrine that Christ's offering has been fully made long ago on Calvary, and cannot possibly *not* be accepted by the Eternal Father, and that redemption is timeless now, survives the vivid imagination that *we* poor creatures of earth need to have that Sacrifice *placed* before God in His radiant heaven, and need still that He should accept it and ratify acceptance for us personally. Nor is it mere imagination. The Sacrifice consists of Christ and ourselves *in one*. Perfect though He be, how very far from that are *we*! We may well implore that we, as ingredient in the offered Bread, may be made acceptable and be accepted. Almost stranger still is the use of words concerning the oblations identical with those used when they had not yet been consecrated (pure, flawless, etc.). It has to be remembered, not only that the original Roman rite has been battered and cut down almost out of recognition, but that it is hardly too much to say that it consists here and there of little more than fragments soldered together out of their first order. Thus it is fairly certain that the two commemorations of Saints came originally together before the consecration, and that the prayers for the living and the dead did likewise. In a moment we shall have to signalise the possibility of a very large omission. But more than this, and a profounder consideration. It is the *whole* "prayer" of the Eucharist that is regarded as "consecrational." However much God made operate transubstantiation at one single moment, and indeed in His eternity, yet we, who have to space out our thoughts and our words, carry on the notion of Offer-

ing and Acceptance, Consecration and Sacrifice, over the entire Canon. Noticeably, on Good Friday, when Mass is not really said at all, it is the *entire* Canon that is omitted. Anyhow, since it is the Roman rite as we possess it, that we also use, we have both the right and the duty to impose on it a sequence and a meaning which the words, by themselves, might not always yield. The priest then continues:

"Remember, too, O Lord, Thy servants, men and women, N and N, who have gone before us with the sign of faith and sleep the sleep of peace. . . To them, O Lord, and to all who rest in Christ, in goodness grant, we pray, a place of coolness, light and peace, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen."

"To us, too, sinners yet Thy servants, who hope but in the multitude of Thy mercies, deign to concede some share and association with Thy holy Apostles and Martyrs—with John (the Baptist), Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas, Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicitas, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucia, Caecilia, Agnes, Anastasia, and all Thy Saints, among whose fellowship, we pray, admit us, not reckoning up our merits, but lavishing Thy pardon. Through Christ our Lord. . ."

The vast audacity—dare I say—of this prayer is apparent. Let us be careful how we pray it. We *ask* to be admitted among martyrs and apostles. I take it we shall not feel at home there unless we have in us something of the apostle and the martyr ourselves. Am I the stuff whereof martyrs are made? is my life apostolic? Well, we turn to something vaster still, namely, God's supreme Apostle, and the most faithful of all witnesses, our Lord:—

"Through Christ our Lord, through Whom, O Lord, Thou ever dost create, and sanctify, and vivify, and bless all these good things, and to us dost give them—Through Him, and with Him, and in Him, there comes to Thee,

God, Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory, for ever and for ever. Amen."

Mysterious prayer indeed! What are these "good things"? Some Catholic scholars think, and ancient documents suggest, that a blessing of some created food or fruit once stood here. Certainly honey and milk were here once blessed, for neophytes to taste. When, that ceremony or others having been given up, part at least of the phrasing of this benediction still remained, it *had* to be understood of the Blessed Sacrament. Leave to one side, however, this archæology, and reflect that it is indeed our Lord who created the whole Eucharist, who blessed its elements, and sanctifies them, and brings them to life, and gives them to ourselves; and so, by means of Him, and never and nowhere separate from Him, and actually *in His Person* into which we, incorporate by Grace and destined in a moment to be yet closelier incorporate by sacramental Communion, are kneaded—thus alone does the supreme Glory go to God, for ever and for ever.

As these magnificent words are pronounced, the priest lifts up the Blessed Sacrament, holding the Host upright above the Chalice. It has been well pointed out that there has always been *an* Elevation during Mass. Only the lifting up of Christ was mostly made just before our Communion, coupled with the very ancient words: "Holy things unto the holy." One of the dislocations in our Mass has consisted in the thrusting forward both of the Kiss of Peace and of the *Pater*; and it would seem that the pre-Communion elevation has moved backwards to this climax of sublimity, and indeed, at such a moment it would be appropriate to lift up Christ in the eyes of all those people whom, if

but He be lifted up, He says, He will draw to Himself. The elevation at the consecration has a different history, and is of very late introduction, though our English ancestors had an overwhelming devotion to it, and thronged to "see God," and were unhappy and hardly felt that they had been to Mass if they had not so "seen" the Blessed Sacrament.

Next, with awe and almost under protest, the priest recites the prayer that Christ Himself bequeathed to His Christians:

> "Let us pray. Urged on by saving precept, and schooled by divine lessoning, we dare to say"—And the Our Father follows.

It is best to leave it without commentary, and to ask Him who bade us say it to inspire us with its meaning. I will only add that the words "on earth as it is in heaven" qualify each of the preceding petitions. May God's Name be blessed by men as by His angels—may His kingdom come on earth, as it exists in heaven: on earth may His will be done, as in heaven it is perfectly accomplished. And if you like, think that our Lord is Heaven, and that we are earth. May God gradually triumph in our divided love, as in Christ He triumphed perfectly.

From now on, the idea of Communion becomes dominant. The priest first says; catching up the last words of the Pater and expanding them:—

> "Deliver us, O Lord, from every evil, past, present and to come, and at the intercession of the blessed and glorious ever-Virgin, Mary, with Thy blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and Andrew, and all the Saints, grant graciously peace in our days, that helped by the succour of Thy mercy, we may be ever free from all sin, and undistressed by any anxiety, through, etc. . ."

This prayer foreshadows the Kiss of Peace that will be given in a moment, and one of the two great notions that are inseparable from that of true communion—peace and unity. Why is St. Andrew so unexpectedly mentioned here? I suppose, because it was he who indicated the lad who had that food whereof the miraculous multiplication was made. But as the priest recites the concluding words (through, etc.), he breaks the bread first into two, and then from one part detaches a small fragment, and places it in the Chalice, and adds, "The Peace of the Lord be with you always." The answer: "And with thy spirit," is made; and he says privately: "May this mingling and consecration of the Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be for those who receive It unto everlasting life." An immense history is indicated by this action.

That *a* breaking of the Eucharistic bread should occur during Mass, was inevitable, since Christ so broke it; and necessary, so long as all communicated from one great Host. (And it must be confessed that some of the original symbolism of sharing in one food is lost by our present practice.) Hence in every rite there has been a breaking of the Bread, and a mixing of it with the consecrated Wine. But our present rite has another origin. In Rome, a fragment of the Host consecrated on the previous day was solemnly carried to the place where the Pope meant to say Mass. At this point, the deacon presented it to him, and he placed it in the Chalice, reserving, similarly, a fragment from what he had consecrated to-day, for use during the Mass of to-morrow. Admirably indeed was illustrated thus the unity of Mass: in a true sense there is but one Mass in all the world; and by inserting

thus yesterday's Mass into to-day's, and to-day's into to-morrow's, this unity was vigorously proclaimed. At High Mass, after the offering of the bread, the priest gives the paten to the deacon, who holds it muffled in the humeral veil till after the *Pater*, when he gives the paten to the celebrant, and divests himself of the veil. Why all this mystery about an empty plate? Because, at first, it was *not* empty. It had on it the Blessed Sacrament from yesterday, and that is what the minister held studiously covered, until he handed it to the priest to be placed in to-day's Chalice. Another touching rite once prevailed. The pope at this point would send to his suffragans and the parish priests of Rome a fragment of the bread, called the "fermentum." This was a very early and general piece of ritual. It meant, that he and they were in the closest of communion, for they placed what he had sent in their Chalice, and so went to Communion with him at a distance. Why was it called "fermentum," which means *leaven*? For a frankly mystical reason. As leaven knits together the crumbling flour loaf, so the Blessed Sacrament has for work the holding together into one all those who receive it.

The *Agnus Dei*—"grant us peace" with its sacrificial associations, was a natural hymn to sing about this point; but it was not introduced till late, in order to fill up the time taken by the breaking of the bread for Communion. The Kiss of Peace, too, is given at this point at least in High Masses. At Low Mass, the celebrant has kissed at least the paten. The three lovely Communion prayers, said personally by the celebrant, were not fixed to their place till the reform of Pius V. They are:—

"Lord Jesus Christ, who didst say to Thine Apostles: Peace I leave to you; My peace give I unto you—look not upon my sins, but on the faith of Thy Church, and do Thou deign to give her peace and perfect unity according to Thy will, who livest and reignest God, for ever and ever, Amen. (Here the Kiss is given.) Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who by the Will of the Father, with the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, didst by Thy death give life unto the world, free me by this Thy most holy Body and Blood from all my sins, and from every ill; and make me cling ever close to Thy commandments, and never suffer me to be separated from Thee, who with the selfsame God the Father and the Holy Spirit dost live and reign, God, for ever and ever, Amen. May the receiving of Thy Body, Lord Jesus Christ, that I unworthy do presume to receive, not work out for me unto judgment and condemnation, but, for Thy kindness' sake, be unto me for a protection both of mind and body, and may I find therein my healing. Who livest and reignest, etc. Amen."

Can more comprehensive, more rich, more humble and more trustful, more personal prayers anywhere be found? Observe the rare approach, now, to our Lord in person; and the "I" used by the loving, yet trembling priest. He then adds: "I will receive the Bread of Heaven, and call on the Name of the Lord." Then thrice he says, beating his breast: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof; but speak with but one word, and my soul shall be healed." Finally he says: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ guard my soul unto eternal life, Amen." And after a pause: "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He hath given me? I will take the Chalice of Salvation, and call on the Lord's Name. With praise will I call upon the Lord, and from mine enemies shall be saved. The Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, guard my

soul unto eternal life, Amen." He uses the due adaptation of these words when giving Communion to the Faithful.

This book is not meant to be a devotional one precisely, and all who use it will certainly have their own method of entering into touch with our Lord in their Communion-hours. But it is most assuredly the "mind" of the Missal, as of Our Lord in instituting the Eucharist, and of St. Paul when writing so earnestly about it, that it should *not* be thought of primarily as an intimate piece of personal devotion, but as a *Social Act*. Impossible to over-stress the Church's insistence upon the notes of unity, charity, and peace that belong to it. Side by side we kneel at the same table, and receive the same food, and not merely as though we all ate portions from one dish, fragments of one loaf: but each receives the same, and the whole, namely Jesus Christ our Lord; and God forgive us if forthwith we revert to our old habits of uncharity and exclusiveness. There can be nothing *selfish* about the Christian who has thus received the uttermost that his Lord could give to him—to him, and to every one of his fellows who but wills to accept Him. I need but add that Communion is so integral in the full notion of Sacrifice and of this Sacrifice in particular, that I ought to be careful to make a spiritual communion at every Mass I go to—an act which, thank God, I can make also at any time, and need not, on account of it, be fasting. Intensify these spiritual Communions of yours with the source itself of life.

After the Communion the priest washes the Chalice and then his fingers. While doing so he says:

> "What we have received with our lips, O Lord, may we with pure minds accept, that from the gift of one day

an eternal remedy may become ours." And then: May Thy Body, Lord, that I have taken and Thy Blood that I have drunk, cling to my heart, and grant that in me no trace of sin remain, whom Thy holy Sacraments have made a new creation."

I acknowledge that the word *refecere* may mean little more than "have refreshed": but the intensification of grace by means of Communion is such that I do indeed emerge from my Communion with new life in me—a new man, as we say after a rest or a "cure." Most definitely, part of the "mind of the Missal" is its insistence on the medicinal aspect of Communion. "Medicine that makes immortal" was a phrase often used of it in Patristic times. I go then "to Communion" *not* because I am strong and healthy, but, because I am sick; not because I deserve it, but because I do not: not, by reason of what I am, but for the sake of what I must become, and of what Christ means to make me.

The ritual now hurries to its end. Our "Communion" was a chant used during the actual Communion, to hold the attention of those who were waiting for their turn. Of antiphon, psalm, antiphon, only the antiphon now remains. As for the "post-Communion," it is a prayer modelled on the "collect," and usually contains some reference to the Gift we have received. The prayer "for the people" that survives on weekdays in Lent, and is now prefaced by the penitential warning: "Humble your heads before the Lord," may conceivably be the relics of vespers, sung immediately after Mass. Anyhow, save in the lengthier prayers fitting for Lent, it has been quite discarded. Then the people are told that the service is over: "*Ite, missa est*" means: "Go, it is the dismissal," *missa* being a variant

for *missio*. On fast days and eves, we learn, people did not leave the church after Mass but waited for other prayers. So the dismissal was not spoken, but "Let us bless the Lord" was substituted. Hence that phrase has come to be regarded as proper to penitential occasions.

Why, if the people have been dismissed, are there then yet other prayers? They are as private a set of devotions, in origin, as all the first part of "Mass" said at the altar-foot. As the priest turned away from the altar, he kissed it, as usual, out of respect; while he did so, he said some prayer which has crystallised into the actual: "May the due performance of my service be pleasing to Thee, O Holy Trinity; and grant that the sacrifice that I unworthy have offered to the eyes of Thy Majesty may be acceptable to Thee, and for me, and for all for whom I have offered it, prove by Thy mercy to be propitiatory through Christ our Lord." Then, as the bishop left the church, he would pass blessing the folk: priests, too, adopted this habit, and hence *the Blessing* arose. Finally, the priest has come to recite, at the gospel corner, part of the first chapter of St. John. Even since Pius V, who first admitted it to be part of the Mass ritual, this has not always been done. Appropriate as is this remembrance of the sojourn of God's Word amid men, it is definitely part of the priest's thanksgiving, and not of public worship.

Perhaps enough has been said to explain the structure of the Mass. It is seen that all its ceremonies grew up quite naturally, and whatever mystical or poetical values may afterwards have been attached to them their origin was utilitarian and logical. It is far better,

to see first what the *point* of the various elements in our ritual really was: else, Mass either remains a jumble of haphazard prayers and actions, as it looked to me when first I watched it; or it gets treated with arbitrary devotion. I have thought often that while undoubtedly there is, even for the heretic, an "atmosphere" about Mass that is like nothing else, yet it is cruel to ask a convert to love and enter into the joy of our liturgy if its sheer physiology and biology, so to say, be not explained to him. Certainly, I have known Mass "come alive" for many, once they knew the "why and wherefore" of its details. Then they could *use* what hitherto had but passed before their eyes.

PART II

In the second part of this book the actual Masses that are said Sunday by Sunday in our churches, together with some festival Masses allied to certain Sundays or such as take precedence even over Sundays, will be studied. The Sunday Masses are given preference, because since the happy reform of Pius X, these splendid and characteristic Masses have come back into their proper place. After this, a *few* Masses connected with the Saints and with special subjects will be more briefly spoken of.

We have already said that by now any constant *idea* running through any one Mass, giving it unity, and tying together its various parts, is seldom to be found. It makes it far easier, however, to "follow" a Mass, when some such idea is provided, and we try usually to do so, or at least to emphasise the idea proper to the season, so as really to get at a "mind" in the Missal, and not merely a number of prayers following one another haphazard.

For this purpose it will not always be necessary to translate each entire Mass. When for example a prayer is quite general, or when an "Offertory" or "Communion" is but a "communion," a kind of "neutral" verse from a psalm—almost a liturgical *cliché*—it need not be cited. The gist, the point, moreover, of epistle and gospel may often suffice without full quotation. All the more I beg to recall that this book is no sort of

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substitute for the Missal. My hope would be, that readers would use it to prepare their Sunday or even weekday Mass, *along with* the Missal. Thus they would learn very soon to use the Missal without referring at all to this book. This were manifestly much better. Nor of course, should any one feel obliged to use, at any given Mass, all that is in this book upon that Mass or even in the Missal. When you find you have got, spiritually speaking, what you want, you need go no further. Rest upon that. Refresh your soul with the water that God gives you, and leave the well alone. In a word: the one and only object of this book is to help, God willing, a reader to "offer Mass" more and more whole-heartedly, and not merely to be "present *at* it."

ADVENT

Advent is definitely not an anticipated Lent. Not till relatively recently did its liturgy assume the penitential purple. *Alleluia* is still sung. But its rôle is a very important one.

Of course in a sense it is a preparation for Christmas. But, you may say, incidentally. Its great object is to force our eyes towards the future. It insists that this life with its apparatus that seems so solid is at best a preparation, and, in comparison with what it prepares for, a passing pageant merely. To impress this upon us, it constantly leads our glance back, at first, towards that past in which God's Chosen People is seen living in a world of Promise and of Prophecy. The proper view to be taken of life then was, not what it at the moment *was*, but that towards which it was moving, what it was being guided to, namely Christ and Christ's work within human life.

Therefore most certainly the Coming of Christ into the world when He was born of Mary dawns ever more clearly across the cloudy future, as Advent and its Masses progress. But after all, even that Coming, and all the well-loved incidents of Bethlehem, were not ends in themselves. Even they were "ordered" towards His Coming into the heart of each, to which sin alone provides the obstacle. But even so, Christ is *active* and His activity is directed towards the removal of that obstacle to His arrival. Who is aware of the moment when grace inserts itself into the soul? Very few, just as very few were privileged to visit His manger that first Christmas. This double Coming, then, of Christ into this world, and of Christ into each soul, is a silent one.

Silent too, and veiled enough is that daily Coming that is accomplished in the Mass; but the very fact that what we are here dealing with *is* Mass, suffices to concentrate our attention upon it.

The final Coming, however, is to be public, social, a radiant day save for those who have identified their life with that which, precisely, Advent tries to make us see as *not* final, not self-sufficient. The "death" of the "world," and Christian "resurrection and glorification" are then the last Coming, in power and in glory, and it is individually rehearsed by the Christian's bodily death and salvation. Hence Advent carries us, in its vast sweep, from the creation and purpose of this world, through the age of Promise and of Prophecy, to that Christian life which began, visibly, at Bethlehem, which pursues itself through sacrament and Mass, and stripping off of sin and practice of virtue, to the revelation given by death, and to the final manifestation of all.

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Introit. Ps. xxiv. To Thee lift I up my soul, my God: in Thee I trust—let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies mock over me: for not one of those who look towards Thee shall be put to confusion. Show me, O Lord, Thy ways, and teach me Thy paths. Glory. To Thee, etc.

Prayer. Rouse up, we pray Thee, Lord, Thy power, and come; that from the dangers which for our sins hang over us, by Thy protection we may be succoured, and by Thy rescue saved.

The *Epistle* warns us:—

Brethren, realise that now is the hour for us to rise from sleep. For nearer now is our Salvation than when we first believed. The night is far spent: the day is at hand. Let us then throw aside the works of darkness and clothe ourselves with the array of light. Let us walk honourably, as in the daylight, not in riotings and drunkenness, nor in wantonness nor lusts, nor in strivings and envyings, but clothe yourselves in—Jesus Christ. (Romans xiii.)

St. Paul insists that for the Christian his conversion is but as the dawn. In the Christian life, the light must each day grow brighter. *Arma* does not here mean more than *gear*, equipment. Do not lead the furtive, licentious life that night permits: in a word —put on, O Christian, the very personality of Christ.

Gradual. Not one of those who look towards Thee, O Lord, shall be put to confusion. Make known to me Thy ways, O Lord, and teach me Thy paths. Alleluia, alleluia. Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy, and grant us Thy salvation, Alleluia.

The Gospel (Luke xxi) warns Christians of that Last Day which, for the contemporaries of Our Lord, was symbolised by the destruction of Jerusalem, and, for each of us, by his own death-day.

Offertory. Ps. xxiv. (The same as the Introit-Antiphon.) The *Silent Prayer.*

May this holy act, O Lord, cause us to be cleansed by mighty power, and to reach more purely to its Origin.

Communion. Ps. lxxxiv. The Lord will grant good gifts —our earth shall give its fruit.

Post-Communion. May we welcome, O Lord, Thy Mercy in the midst of Thy Temple, that with worthy honours we may prepare for the coming feast of our Redemption.

A grave Mass of unpresumptuous trust. The soul acknowledges its deep need of those warnings of Christ and His Apostles, and begins by imploring salvation from Him who alone can, but surely will, save. And from the Communion onwards, it looks definitely towards the mighty pledge of God's goodness that Christmas is.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Introit. Isai. xxx. People of Sion, behold, the Lord shall come for the saving of the peoples; and the Lord shall make heard the glory of His voice in the gladness of your heart. Ps. lxxix. O Thou that rulest Israel, give ear—who like a Shepherd guidest Joseph home.

Prayer. Arouse, O Lord, our hearts, unto the preparing of Thy Sole-Begotten's paths, that, through His Coming we may be enabled to serve Thee with minds made pure.

The *Epistle* (Romans xv) after some lines of exhortation to unity, links up the immemorial promises of God made to the Chosen People of old, with the immediate work done by our Lord, which was, as He Himself said, on behalf of the people of Israel. "He was a Minister to the Circumcision, *i.e.*, the Jews, because of the loyalty of God, in order to fulfil the promises made to the patriarchs." For all that, God's great mercy always meant the heathen, too, to be saved, and that,

too, had been promised. *The Gospel* shows, on the one hand, Jesus Himself accomplishing in Himself the Messianic promises; and on the other, the supreme dignity of the Baptist, who, though not the Messias, was indeed chosen out of all the world to be His immediate forerunner.

Gradual. Ps. xlix. From Sion is His glorious beauty—thence shall God come, for all alike to see. Gather unto Him the Covenant, over sacrifice. Alleluia, alleluia. Ps. cxxi. I rejoiced when they said to me: "We will go in to the House of the Lord." Alleluia.

Offertory. Ps. lxxxiv. O God, turn, and give us life, and Thy people shall be glad in Thee: show us, O Lord, Thy mercy, and grant us Thy salvation.

The Silent Prayer. Be appeased, we pray Thee, Lord, by the prayers and sacrifices of our humility; and, where no merits of ours are present to intercede, by Thine own aid assist us.

Communion. Baruch iv, v. Jerusalem, rise up, and stand aloft, and see the happiness that shall come to thee from thy God.

Post-Communion. Filled with the food of spiritual sustenance, we humbly entreat Thee, Lord, that by sharing in this mystery, we may be taught by Thee to despise things that are earthly, and to love what is heavenly.

A different note is struck during much of this Mass —we are to look towards the future with assured triumphant hope. Christ *is* come, and come, as for the Jews, according to the promises, so also for us, according to the prophecies. But we must co-operate, if His victory is fully to be won within us.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT (Gaudete).

Introit. Phil. iv. Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice. Let your good behaviour be seen by all men, for the Lord is near. Do not be anxious; but in every prayer make your requests known to God. Ps.

lxxxiv. Thou hast blessed, O Lord, Thy land: Thou hast brought home the captives of Israel.

Prayer. Approach Thine ear, O Lord, we pray Thee, to our prayers, and by the grace of Thy visitation give light to the darkness of our mind.

The Epistle repeats the Introit, adding the lovely words: "And may the peace of God, which surpasseth all imagination, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord." The *Gospel* relates the nobly humble affirmation of the Baptist that he was *not* the Christ. John was but the Voice that heralded His approach.

Gradual. Ps. lxxix. Thou that art throned above the Cherubim, O Lord, arouse Thy power and come! Thou that rulest Israel, give ear—Thou that like a shepherd leadest Joseph home. Alleluia, alleluia. Arouse O Lord Thy power, and come to save us.

Offertory. Ps. lxxxiv. Thou hast blessed, O Lord, Thy land: Thou hast brought home the captives of Israel; Thou hast remitted Thy people's sin.

The Silent Prayer. May the sacrifice of our worship, we pray Thee, Lord, be continuously offered up to Thee; and may it both fulfil the holy mysteries that Thou didst institute, and marvellously accomplish Thy salvation in ourselves.

Communion. Isa. xxxv. Say: Be strengthened, ye timid, and do not fear. Lo, our God shall come and rescue us.

Post-Communion. We implore, O Lord, Thy mercy, that this divine reinforcement may expiate our sins and prepare us for the coming feasts.

Even in Advent, a certain strain is conceived by the Church as having been felt by us. And it would be hard to find a more encouraging Mass. Yet it dwells, too, on that Advent-thought that till we are "in heaven," we are always more or less "from *home*" and in exile. Christ comes for the shepherding homewards of each heart. In this spirit of austere exultation should we offer it.

WEDNESDAY IN EMBER WEEK OF ADVENT.

Introit. Isai. xlv. Drop dew, ye heavens from above, and let the clouds rain down the Righteous one. Let the earth open, and flower forth the Saviour. Ps. xviii. The heavens forthtell the glory of God, and the firmament declares His handiwork.

This Mass, like that for Saturday, contains more than one "reading": cf. p. 61. For "Flectamus genua" etc., see p. 17.

Prayer. Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that the coming celebration of our Redemption may not only confer on us assistance for our present life, but lavish on us the reward of eternal bliss.

The first reading (Isai. ii) is a joyous picture of the peaceful reign of the Messias. The first *Gradual* is:—

Ps. xxiii. Lift up your gates, ye chieftains, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who shall go up into the mountain of the Lord? and who shall stand within His holy place? The pure of hand; the clean of heart!

Prayer. Hasten, we pray Thee, Lord—do not delay, and impart to us the help of heavenly power, that by the comfort of Thy Coming they may be relieved, who trust in Thine affection.

The Epistle tells of the sign given to Achaz—"a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son" (Isai. vii), and the Gospel tells of the actual Annunciation.

Gradual (2). Near is the Lord to all who call upon Him, to all who faithfully do call on Him. Ps. cxliv. My lips shall sing the praise of the Lord; yea, let all flesh bless His holy Name.

The Silent Prayer. May our fast, O Lord, be acceptable to Thee, and by expiating sin may it make us worthy of Thy grace, and bring us through to Thine eternal promises.

Offertory. Isai. xxxv. Comfort ye, and fear no more;

for behold our God shall do justice: He shall come and shall save us.

Communion. Isai. vii. Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and His Name shall be called "Emmanuel."

Post-Communion. Having feasted, O Lord, on the rich gift of Thy salvation, we humbly beg Thee that That which rejoices us when we feed on it, may by its work in us renew us.

Christmas is here very explicitly announced; but the Ember Days are concerned with Ordination. Let us pray for those whom the priesthood is to turn into Christ's representatives—who should be "Second Christs" amongst us.

EMBER FRIDAY IN ADVENT.

Introit. Ps. cxviii. Near art Thou, O Lord, and all Thy ways are truth: from the outset have I known of Thy Law, for eternal art Thou. Happy are the stainless in their goings, they that walk in the Law of the Lord.

Prayer. Rouse up, we pray Thee, Lord, Thy power and come, that those, who trust in Thine affection, may be the quicker freed from all adversity.

The *Epistle* (Isai. xi) contains the wonderful description of God's Anointed.

A sprout shall spring from the root of Jesse; yea, from his root a blossom shall bloom forth. And there shall rest on Him the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of strength, the spirit of knowledge and of devotion, and the spirit of reverence to the Lord shall fill Him. He shall not judge according to the seeing of the eye, nor rebuke according to the hearing of the ear, but he shall judge the poor in justice, and give righteous rebuke in favour of the gentle on the earth."

The *Gospel* (Luke i) relates the fulfilment of this prophecy when Mary conceived her child, and the

beginning of His beneficence during the Visitation, and His recognition by Elizabeth, and the Magnificat of Mary.

Gradual. Ps. lxxxiv. Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy, and grant us Thy salvation. Thou hast blessed Thine earth, O Lord; Thou hast brought Israel's captives home.

Offertory. O God, turn, and give us life: and Thy folk shall be glad in Thee. Show us, O Lord, thy mercy, and grant us Thy salvation.

The Silent Prayer. Accept, we pray Thee, Lord, our gifts and our prayers; cleanse us by the heavenly mysteries and in Thy mercy hear us.

Communion. Zach. xiv. Behold, the Lord shall come, and with Him all His Saints, and in that day a great Light shall shine.

Post-Communion. May our holy feasting on Thy Sacrament, O Lord, refresh us, and cause us, cleansed from the old life, to cross into communion with the mystery of salvation.

Again, this Mass carries the Christian forward, his heart beating with hope, towards the hour of his salvation. If indeed the Coming of our Lord be the Coming of such an one as epistle and gospel announce, who can wonder at the joyous, urgent summoning of the rest of its prayers? May His priests too, be full of such a spirit: may their ministry be rich, like Mary's approach, with grace-giving.

Ember Saturday in Advent.

Introit. Ps. lxxix. Come, and show us Thy face, O Lord, who art throned above the Cherubim, and we shall be saved. O Thou that rulest Israel, give ear—who, like a shepherd, leadest Joseph home.

The Prayers are: O God, who seest well that we are oppressed by our perversities, graciously grant, that by Thy visitation we may be comforted. Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that we who are crushed beneath the

yoke of the ancient enslavement of our sins, may, by the new birth of Thy Sole-Begotten Son that we hope for, be set free. We pray Thee, Lord, gladden by the Coming of Thy Sole-Begotten Son, us Thine unworthy servants whom the faultiness of their own actions saddens. Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that the approaching Feast-day of Thy Son may confer upon us alike a remedy for this life, and a prize eternal. Mercifully grant, we pray Thee, Lord, the prayers of Thy people, that we who for our sins justly are laid low, may by the visit of Thy love be comforted. O God, who for Thy three servants didst quell the fiery flames, mercifully grant that we Thy servants be consumed by no flame of vice.

The prayers of Advent have at last become penitential. It is right that before the very great joys of Christmas we should do some penance and not forget how utterly we have not deserved any such thing. Yet we may be grateful to the Church for having put these thoughts not *immediately* before the Feast. For who could be cast down on Christmas Eve?

The first reading is Isai. xix, telling that the Lord will send a Champion for His people, and the immemorial pagan foe, Egypt, shall be struck—but only for its healing; and not for destruction, but for conversion and salvation, shall Messias come. From one end of heaven, exclaims the *Gradual* concerning the divine sunrise, is His forth-going, and to the end thereof His course. The heavens forthtell the glory of God, and the firmament makes manifest His handiwork (Ps. xviii).

The second reading is one of the most glorious passages of Isaias (xxxv): The desert, trackless land shall rejoice, and the lonely land exult, and flower like lilies. Rich shall be its flowering, and with joy, with praise, its exultation. The glory of Lebanon is granted to it, the loveliness of Carmel and of Saron; yea, men shall

see the glory of the Lord, and the loveliness of our God. So give power to the fainting hands, strengthen the weak knees. Say to the frightened—Be strong, and fear not! Behold, your God shall bring you requital and repayment—God Himself shall come, and save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear. Then shall the lame man leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb be loosed. For waters have broken forth in the desert, and fountains in the wilderness. And the parched land shall become a pool, and the thirsting land, sources of fresh water, saith the Lord Almighty. *The Gradual* recalls our mind to that Sun that shines but does not scorch—"In the sun hath He placed His tent—the sun, that like bridegroom, forthfaring from his chamber, from one end of heaven hath his outgoing, and to heaven's further end his course." The third reading, Isai. xl, tells again of the Coming of the Lord, who, though so mighty, "shall feed His flock like a shepherd, and in His arms shall gather the lambs, and in His bosom carry them."

God of power, prays the *Gradual* (Ps. lxxix), convert us! show us Thy face, and we shall be saved. Rouse up, O Lord, Thy power, and come to save us. The fourth reading is Isai. xlv and one of the most mysterious among prophecies. The prophet begins by declaring that the great Persian king, the pagan Cyrus, is none the less God's Anointed and that He holds him by the hand, and that He has called him by his name, and has re-named him even though Cyrus knew naught about Him—"I have girded thee, though Me thou hast not known." All this, for the sake of the Chosen People Israel, God's Servant, whom Cyrus was to send back from their exile. God alone omnipotent,

is He who works these marvels. And rising with incredible rapidity from the vision of the earthly monarch who was to accomplish the return from the earthly exile, to the rescue of the race from its exile in sin, and to the supreme Rescuer, the prophet cries the words already quoted in these Advent-Masses and to be quoted yet again—"Drop dew, ye heavens from above . . . let the earth flower forth its Saviour!" *The Gradual* is composed of words often already used, adding: "Appear before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasse" —to all the folk of Israel. The last additional reading tells of the rescue of the three companions of Daniel from the furnace, and is followed by the noble hymn in which all creation is invited to praise the Lord who brings all these great things to pass.

The ordinary *Epistle* (II Thess. ii) suggests that the Church definitely wants to warn her children against the panic which from the very beginning of Christian history has periodically plunged upon them—or, if not panic, at least ill-advised conviction that the end of the world was imminent. The latter part of the Epistle alludes to the veiled instruction that Paul had already given to his converts—he probably said that the Roman Emperors would soon enough be demanding actual worship from all their citizens, though this would not happen immediately—there were obstructions in the way (quite possibly the character of the Emperor actually reigning). So he implores that nothing whatsoever should shift them from their faith and peace of mind—not even a forged letter purporting to be from himself, should they receive one. The Coming of the Lord is certain, but its date is absolutely unknown, and our Lord Himself insisted that it was no part of His Mission to make it known. Having

thus emphasised that the "when" of the last Coming has been left completely in the dark, the Missal, in its *Gradual,* recommences its familiar cry that Christ *should* come, in all the other ways in which He wishes and is accustomed to—by His temporal birth, by grace, by the sacraments. The *Gospel* relates the immediate preparation for that first Coming, the preaching of the Baptist.

Offertory. Zach. ix. Rejoice indeed, daughter of Sion, cry aloud, daughter of Jerusalem: behold Thy King is coming unto thee, the Holy One, the Saviour.

The Silent Prayer. Look in goodness, Lord, we pray, upon this sacrifice, that it may serve both our piety and our salvation.

Communion. Ps. xviii. Like a giant exulteth he to run his course: from one end of heaven is his outgoing, and to heaven's other end his course.

Post-Communion. We pray, O Lord our God, that Thou wouldst cause the most holy mysteries that Thou hast bestowed for the bulwark of our redemption, to be a remedy for us, both now and hereafter.

The Mass then, after its first and penitential part, turns into direct instruction, and again, into its normal forward-gaze.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

The Introit is that of last Wednesday—Drop dew, etc.

The Prayer. Arouse, we pray Thee, Lord, Thy power, and come, and with great might succour us, that by the help of Thy grace, that which our sins do hinder, Thy merciful forgiveness may hasten.

The Epistle (I Cor. iv) turns the mind of the Sunday congregation back to the fact that this is a period of Ordinations, and reminds them, as well as the new priests, that a priest is the immediate servant of God—the riches he dispenses are not his own, but God's.

Therefore he must yield in nothing to human respect, but faithfully serve his Master. At the end, when all secrets shall be laid bare, each man shall receive his due reward.

The Gradual (Ps. cxliv) sings: The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, who call on Him sincerely. My lips shall speak the praises of the Lord, and all flesh shall bless His holy Name. Alleluia, alleluia! Come, Lord, delay not: loosen the fetters of Thy people Israel.

The Gospel is that of yesterday—the preaching of John and indeed every new priest is becoming a herald of our Lord.

Offertory. The Hail Mary.

The Silent Power. As yesterday.

Communion. Isai. vii. Behold, a maiden shall conceive and bear a Son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel.

Post-Communion. Having received these gifts, O Lord, we pray that proportionately with our frequenting of Thy mystery, the effect of our salvation may increase.

Enough to sum up, to-day, in our minds, the thoughts that Advent has provided, and to pray earnestly for the future of the new-ordained.

Christmas Eve.

Introit. Ex. xvi. To-day you shall know that the Lord will come, and will save us, and to-morrow shall you see His glory. Ps. xxiii. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof: the whole round world, and all that dwell therein.

Prayer. O God, who dost gladden us by our yearly looking forward to our Redemption, grant that Thy Sole-Begotten, whom as Redeemer we so gladly hail, may be seen by us also as our Judge without any fear.

The Epistle (Rom. i) Paul, in a superb comprehensive vision, sets before us Christ, theme of prophecy,

born a man, Son of God, risen from the dead, and source of every grace, for each, and for all, and among those "all," ourselves therefore.

The Gradual repeats the first part of the Introit and other familiar words, and, if Christmas Eve falls on Sunday, adds the Alleluias, and the words: "Tomorrow shall the iniquity of the earth be done away, and the Saviour of the world shall reign over us."

The Gospel relates the anxiety of St. Joseph and his supernatural enlightening. He, assuredly, had a grave, nay terrible, "eve" to his first Christmas.

Offertory. Ps. xxiii. Lift up your heads, ye chieftains, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.

The Silent Prayer. Grant us, we pray Thee, Almighty God that we, who anticipate the adorable birthday of Thy Son may also with joy receive His everlasting gifts.

Communion. Is. xl. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

Post-Communion. Grant us, O Lord, we pray, to draw new breath from the commemoration of Thy Sole-Begotten Son's nativity, whose heavenly mystery is to us both food and drink.

With this vivid prayer, insisting that Christ is to us, quite simply, Life itself, the Masses of Expectation pass into those of Fulfilment—the Hope, into the Presence. It might be well to spend part of Christmas Eve, especially the hours between the evening meal and Midnight Mass, in re-reading the Advent Masses. Those hours are not suitably occupied with noise or merry-making. If we have carefully followed the above Masses during Advent, their main ideas will stand forth quite easily as we re-read them; and we

shall gradually acquire an "Advent state-of-mind," into which we pass spontaneously as Advent comes round each year. We shall learn to regard the world's tremendous past with awe, as the drama of God's gradual education and forward-leading of mankind: we shall tend more and more to see Christ as the centre of all history: and we shall recognise without possibility of mistake that our own vocation is one of advance and that our destiny is ahead of us; and we shall be freed from the frightful illusion that our business in life is to suck the last drop of pleasure from the present. Advent forces me to ask myself? "Whither am I tending? what am I becoming," and the moment I experience the least doubt as to whether I am moving in the right direction, and becoming what God created me to be, I fly with great intensity of desire to our Lord, Communion with whom *ensures* my becoming that very thing for which God made me. Hence I shall be able to go with great "appetite" to the Communion of Christmas Day: I shall have joined in the restless cry of the Missal during these days—"Come, Lord! Come to us! Come with power into my life!" And God will have answered, though the coming be so silent, in the night like a dew upon the fields, dew on our hearts—a tiny Child.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a tender and "human" feast. But not one of its Masses permits us to forget that the Child whose birth we commemorate is God. Our eyes see Bethlehem; but our faith must read into Eternity; and adoration must always be at the heart of our rejoicing.

THE MIDNIGHT MASS.

Introit. Ps. ii. The Lord said to me: "My Son art Thou; to-day have I begotten Thee."—Why do the heathen muster, and the people muse on vanity?

Prayer. O God, who has made this most holy night to be bright with the enkindling of true Light, grant, we pray, that we, who have known the mysteries of that Light on earth, may rejoice also for ever in its joys in heaven.

The *Epistle* (Titus ii) recalls that "The Grace of God our Saviour hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that we should renounce all impiousness and worldly desires, and live modestly and justly and devoutly on this earth, looking forward to the blessed hope of the Coming of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to cleanse for Himself an acceptable people seeking after all good works. Speak this, preach this, in Christ Jesus our Lord." See how this epistle catches up the thoughts grown familiar during Advent and pours them into Christmas Day!

Gradual. Ps. cix. With Thee is the princeship in the day of Thy power: in the splendours of the holy places before the Morning Star did I from Myself beget Thee. Alleluia, alleluia! Ps. ii. The Lord said to Me: Thou art my Son; 'tis I that did this day beget Thee. Magnificently does the liturgy use scripture to display the double "birth" of the Son—in God's eternity, and in time.

The *Gospel* (Luke ii) relates the birth of Christ and the message to the shepherds.

Offertory. Ps. xcv. Let heaven rejoice and let the earth exult in the presence of the Lord, for He is come!

The Silent Prayer. May the offering of to-day's sacrifice be acceptable to Thee, O Lord, we pray, that, by

Thy generous grace, through this most holy transaction we may be made into the likeness of Him in whom with Thee our human nature is. This sublime prayer asks what the prayer at the blessing of the water (p. 24) implores, that as God's Son now shares our human nature, so we may be uplifted into a sharing in His divine one.

Communion. Ps. cix. In the splendours of the holy place before the Morning Star did I from Myself beget Thee.

Post Communion. Grant us, we pray Thee, O Lord our God, that we who rejoice to celebrate by these mysteries the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ may by a worthy life be allowed to reach to His companionship.

THE DAWN MASS, CHRISTMAS DAY.

Introit. Isai. ix. Light shall shine to-day upon us, for the Lord is born unto us, and He shall be called "Wonderful: God, Prince of Peace, Father of Eternity," and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Ps. lxii. The Lord is King: with beauty hath He arrayed Himself; the Lord hath arrayed Himself and girded Himself with might.

Prayer. Grant us, we pray, Almighty God, that we who are bathed in the new Light of Thy Word made flesh, may show shining in our works that which by faith is resplendent in our minds.

The *Epistle* (Titus iii) exclaims that "the kindness and humanity of God our Saviour" has appeared amongst us, and bids us look with gratitude towards that Bath of New Birth wherein the Holy Spirit renews us and makes us heirs of eternal life. The *Gospel* (Luke ii) completes the story of the shepherds.

The Gradual. Ps. cxvii. Blessed be He who is come in the name of the Lord—God is the Lord, and hath shone upon us. This thing is from God, and it is marvellous in our eyes. (After the Alleluias, the second part of the Introit is repeated.)

Offertory. Ps. xcii. God hath established the round

world that it be not moved: from of old, O God, Thy throne is set—from eternity art Thou.

The Silent Prayer. May our gifts, we pray Thee, Lord, prove suited to the Nativity of to-day and ever pour peace upon us; so that even as the Selfsame hath shone forth born a man, yet God, so this His earthly nature may confer upon us that which is divine.

Communion. Zach. ix. Exult, daughter of Sion; sing praise daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto Thee, holy, and the Saviour of the world.

Post-Communion. May the birthday newness of this Sacrament, O Lord, ever make us new, seeing that His incomparable Nativity hath driven out the old self of our humanity.

THE DAY MASS.

Introit. Isai. ix. Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given: the princedom shall be upon His shoulder, and His Name shall be called "Messenger of the Great Counsel." Ps. xcvii. Sing to the Lord a new song, for He hath done marvellous things.

Prayer. Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that the New Birth of Thy Sole-Begotten in the flesh, may set us free, whom the primeval enslavement holds beneath the yoke of sin.

The *Epistle* is the magnificent opening of the Letter to the Hebrews—"God who in many ways and in many fragments spoke of old in the prophets to our fathers, at last in these our days hath spoken to us in a Son, whom He hath constituted heir of all things, through whom He made the world. He being the eradiation of God's glory, and the impress of His substance [the glorious Existence of God shines itself out into the Person of the Son, and He is the Image of God as, and better than, the impressed seal is of that seal that impresses it], carrying all things by His powerful word, having accomplished the Cleansing

from Sins, took His seat at the right hand of the Majesty in the Highest." Then magnificently St. Paul hymns the exaltation of the Son above all Angels. The *Gospel* is the familiar first chapter of St. John. "In eternity, the Word existed—and the Word was along with God, yea, the Word was God. Yet (writes the Saint, struggling with the mystery of the Unity of Nature and Diversity of Persons), that selfsame Word, who was God, existed in eternity *with* God." He continues concerning the rôle of the Word in creation—in that creation which was not made save through Himself. In it, He shines as the true Light that would fain reach every man—Light that cannot be quenched, but that may be not attended to. The Baptist came to try to turn men's eyes towards that Light, but they would not look. But to those who did look and accept, "to them gave He power to become Sons of God"—a new creation, born not human-wise nor through human wedlock or desire—"but of God are they born." "Yes—the Word was made Flesh, and took up His home amongst us—and we *did* behold His glory—as of a Sole-Begotten of the Father—full of Grace and Truth!"

Gradual. Ps. xvcii. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Sing triumph to God, O thou whole earth. God hath made manifest His salvation; before the eyes of all peoples hath He revealed His righteousness. Alleluia, alleluia! A Holy Day hath dawned for us; come, ye heathen, and worship God! for to-day a great Light hath descended upon earth.

Offertory. Ps. lxxxviii. Thine are the heavens, and Thine is the earth, and all that is in it is Thy making. In justice and judgment hast Thou built Thy throne.

The Silent Prayer. Sanctify, O Lord, the gifts we offer Thee by the new Birth of Thy Sole-Begotten; and from the stains of our sins do Thou cleanse us.

Communion. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Post-Communion. Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that the Saviour of the world, born to-day, may be for us both the origin of our diviner life, and at last the rich giver of immortality.

With these three Masses may be joined that for the

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE.

Introit. Wisd. xviii. While all things lay in midmost silence, and night pursued the midmost of her course, from royal throne in heaven, O Lord, came Thine Almighty Word. Ps. xcii. The Lord is King; with beauty hath He clad Himself; the Lord hath arrayed and girt Himself with power.

Prayer. Almighty Everlasting God, direct our actions according to Thy good will, that in the Name of Thy beloved Son we may be enabled to abound in good works.

The *Epistle* (Gal. iv), recalls how the taking of our nature by God's Son has made us brothers and fellow-heirs with Him, and therefore has exempted us from all mere legal relation to our God, and has entitled us to the infusion of the Holy Spirit who Himself prays within us, calling "Father" to Him who had been known as Lord. The *Gospel* at last turns our eyes forward to the human history of Christ and contains (Luke ii) the grave prophecy of Simeon.

Gradual. Ps. xliv. Fair art Thou beyond the sons of men, grace is poured forth upon Thy lips. My heart is brimming with a noble theme—I sing my royal hymn!

My tongue is like the pen of a swift writer. Then the verse of the Introit is repeated.

Offertory. Ps. xcii. God hath established the round world, that it be not moved. Thy Throne, O Lord, is from of old; from eternity art Thou.

The Silent Prayer. Grant, we pray, Almighty God,

that the gift offered to the eyes of Thy Majesty may obtain for us the grace of devout affection, and ensure the consequence of a happy eternity.

Communion. Mt. ii. Take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead who sought the life of the Child.

Post-Communion. By the working, O Lord, of this mystery, may our sins be cleansed, and our righteous desires fulfilled.

Just as thoughts, grown familiar during Advent, pass over into the Christmas Masses—not so as to dominate there, but to prevent any dislocation—so thoughts more proper to what is going to follow, namely, the human life of Christ and His future, shine back into the last of the Christmas Masses. This helps us to live continuously and also, perhaps, it prevents us taking the Christmas season in too easy-going a way. It is full of joy: yet already it was involving much poverty, difficulty, and above all non-recognition of Christ. His own received Him not. And it was, we know, the beginning of a life destined to end on Calvary. Mary will have been so happy at her Christmas, that the poverty and hardship will have passed her by almost unnoticed—anyhow, without any power to eclipse her joy: yet she will not have excluded from her mind her knowledge of the tragedy of Israel's Messias. We will ask her to keep our mind "in perspective" during Christmas and at all times, and it might even be helpful to see which of the elements that compose these Masses might have been spoken by Mary herself and what they would have meant upon her lips. We are constantly reminded during them that God is *enthroned:* she, who knew that God had done "great things" for her, such that all future time should name her Blessed, will not have been

affrighted, how humble soever she was, at perceiving that His throne, in this His human childhood, was nothing else than herself—her arms, her breast.

We cannot but notice how often the word "Light" and its allied words—"splendour," "radiance," "illuminate" and others—are set glowing in this Christmas liturgy. They must rivet our attention. Christmas is meant to throw light on the world and on life, and that Light simply *is* Christ, born a man amongst us. A *new* Light. No amount of study of the world apart from Christ will carry us far—indeed, will carry us any distance at all towards its true meaning. It is Catholic doctrine that the world was created and its history governed *in view of Christ*—"unto Him," as well as through Him, "all things were made." But God became man not, so to put it, for His own sake, but for ours. The fact of the Incarnation does not exist in isolation. He was born son of Mary, that we might "be made Sons of God." The whole supernatural destiny of man is involved herein, and we cannot understand ourselves or any part of our existence if we exclude this our true end. Through all this season, then, ask that the Light may triumph in your minds, as prayer after prayer in the three Christmas Masses implores that it should.

The Circumcision.

Introit. Isai. ix. Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: His princedom is upon His shoulder and His Name shall be called Messenger of the Great Counsel. Ps. xcvii. Sing to the Lord a new song, for He hath done marvellous things.

Prayer. God, who by the Child of the Virginity of blessed Mary, hast given the prize of eternal salvation to the human race, grant, we pray, that we may experi-

ence her intercession in heaven, through whom we have been granted to receive the Origin of our Life, Jesus Christ.

The *Epistle* is that used at Midnight Mass, and the tiny *Gospel* carries the vast news of the Name given to God made man—Jesus: Saviour. The *Offertory, Communion,* and *Gradual* are composed of sentences already used in the Masses of Christmastide, and the simple, ancient prayers have no special relation to this feast. Perhaps because of this, a special Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus has been instituted, for, to us, the giving of the Name "Jesus" on the occasion of the Circumcision is more important than the oriental rite itself, rich though its significance was—namely, that the first fruits of any life should be signed as offered to God to whom all things belong. Hence the Second Sunday after the Epiphany is devoted to the Name of Jesus. Still, this Feast encourages in us the habit of giving whatever we do *first* to God, both to beg Him to purify it, then to ask him to prosper it; then to thank Him for it: and emphatically to implore Him to act in and through our actions *Himself,* that they may be "graced" and grace-giving.

FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS.

Introit. Phil. ii. At the Name of Jesus every knee must kneel, of things in heaven, or on earth, and in hell. And every tongue must acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, in the glory of the Father.—Ps. viii. O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is Thy Name in all the earth.

Prayer. O God, who didst establish Thy Sole-Begotten Son as the Saviour of the human race, and didst bid Him to be named Jesus, graciously grant that we who venerate His sacred Name on earth, may likewise enjoy the sight of Him in heaven.

The *Epistle* (Acts iv) tells how St. Peter assigns to the power of our Lord's Name that cure of the crippled man, which stands as immortal symbol for the healing, by our Lord's work, of the ruined world. "Nor is there any other Name under heaven given among men wherein we may be saved." The *Gospel* repeats the little gospel of the Circumcision.

Gradual. Ps. cv. Save us, O Lord, our God, and gather us home from the heathen, that we may give thanks to Thy Holy Name, and make boast of Thy Glory. Isai. lxiii. Thou, Lord, art our Father and Redeemer: eternal is Thy Name. Alleluia, alleluia. Ps. cxliv. My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless His holy Name.

Offertory. Ps. lxxv. I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord with all my heart, and will glorify Thy Name for ever: for Thou Lord, art kind and gentle, and of much mercy to all who call upon Thee. Alleluia.

The Silent Prayer. May Thy blessing, O Lord, whereby every creature lives, sanctify, we pray, this sacrifice, which to the glory of the Name of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, we offer Thee, that it may be able to please Thy Majesty for Thy praise, and serve us for our salvation.

Communion. Ps. lxxxv. All nations whatsoever that Thou hast made, shall come and worship before Thee, Lord, and shall glorify Thy Name, for great art Thou and working wonders; Thou alone art God. Alleluia.

Post-Communion. Almighty Eternal God, who didst create and redeem us, graciously look upon our prayers, and with serene and gracious countenance deign to accept the sacrifice of the Victim of salvation that to the honour of the Name of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, We offer to Thy Majesty; so that through the infusion of Thy grace into us, under the glorious Name of Jesus, we may rejoice that under the heading of eternal predestination our names be written in heaven.

This Mass, we regret to acknowledge, shows not only how late it is, but how forgotten was the liturgical art by its composer. Its prolixity and its piling up of words and even sentences that are quite unnecessary and wholly without rhythm, and its constant use of Old Testament formulas that merely include the *word* "name" place it outside all the artistry of the Missal. None the less, especially if we recall what was said (p. 8) about the value of the notion of "name" in old times, we shall appreciate more thoroughly, owing to this feast, the work and personality of Jesus, and the *substantial* significance of that Name; and, we shall certainly desire more and more to be fully incorporated in Him who is salvation itself, and Saviour.

CANDLEMAS (FEB. 2ND).

The Mass is preceded by the Blessing of the Candles.

There are five prayers for the Blessing of the Candles of Candlemas, just as there are for the Blessing of the Ashes on Ash Wednesday. The first asks that God, who made all things from nothing, and did command that through the work of bees this liquid should reach the perfection of wax, will allow that these material candles shall be of assistance to us in all manner of ways: and in the second prayer, the blessing is invoked by words which couple aged Simeon, carrying in his arms the Light of the World who had come into His Temple, with ourselves "who taking these candles for the magnifying of Thy Name, long to carry them lighted up . . . so that we may be worthy to offer them to Thee, our God, and, lit up by the holy fire of Thy dear love may be fit to be presented in the holy Temple of Thy glory." The third prayer goes thus:—

Lord Jesus Christ, true Light, who givest light to every man that entereth this world, pour forth Thy blessing over these wax candles, and sanctify them by the light of Thy grace, and in kindness grant that even as these lights, lit by visible fire, dispel the darkness of night, so our hearts, fired by invisible flame, that is, by the radiance of the Holy Spirit, may have in them nothing of the blindness of sin, so that the eye of our mind may be cleansed, and we may be able to see what pleaseth Thee and what is useful for our salvation: and thus, after the murky hazards of this life, we may be enabled to come through to the unfaltering Light, through Thee, Christ Jesus, Saviour of the World, who in the perfection of the Trinity livest and reignest God, for ever and ever.

The fourth prayer recalls how Moses was bidden prepare a pure oil for the lighting of the lamps that should burn in God's presence, and asks that even as these tapers minister an outward light, so by God's gift the light of the Holy Spirit be not lacking to our minds within.

The fifth prayer is: Lord Jesus Christ, who didst to-day appear among men in the substance of our flesh, and wast by Thy parents presented in the temple, Thou whom the venerable Simeon, enlightened by the radiance of the Spirit did recognise, took in his arms, and blessed, grant graciously that we, illuminated and instructed by the grace of the selfsame Spirit may sincerely acknowledge Thee and love Thee faithfully.

These prayers prove at once how much the Church wishes us to make full use of exterior symbols, and how impossible she makes it, by her clear mystical doctrine, to treat them superstitiously and as having intrinsic value.

During the distribution of the Candles, the Nunc dimittis is sung antiphonally; then the priest prays that God who allows us to do Christ this exterior

service of devotion every year, would grant us to "obtain Him by the interior light of His grace." While the procession is going forward, Antiphons are sung, most of them from the narrative in St. Luke; but the first as follows:

> Bedeck thy chambers, Sion, and receive, Christ thy King: embrace Mary, that is the Gate of Heaven, for it is she that carries the King of the glorious new light; Virgin she remains, while bringing in her arms that Son who was born before the Morning Star; Him Simeon did take into his arms, and to the heathen proclaimed that He was Lord of life and death and the world's Saviour.

MASS FOR THE FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION.

Introit. Ps. xlvii. We have received, O Lord, Thy mercy in the midst of Thy Temple: in accordance with Thy Name, O Lord, so is Thy praise to the end of the earth; with righteousness is Thy right hand filled, Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised, in the City of our God, in His holy hill.

The Prayer is: Almighty everlasting God, we suppliantly implore Thy Majesty, that even as Thy Sole-Begotten Son was to-day presented in the temple in the substance of our flesh, so Thou wouldst cause us to be presented unto Thee with minds made pure.

The *Epistle* is from the mysterious prophecy of Malachi (iii):

> "Behold, I will send My Messenger, and he shall prepare a path before My face. And forthwith there shall come unto His Temple the Lord whom ye are seeking, the Messenger of My Covenant, whom ye desire. Behold, He is coming, saith the Lord of Hosts, and who can endure the Day of His Advent, and who shall stand up to confront Him? He is like a fire, and shall sit there refining and purifying the silver and cleansing the sons of Levi and rinsing them like gold and like silver, and they shall be offering their sacrifices to God in righteousness. . . ."

The rest of the Mass is made from familiar material, with one exquisite originality:—

Old Age the Child was carrying: yet Childhood was the old man's King. (The Alleluia Chant after the *Gradual.*) The point of the Feast is practically that of the Circumcision—we owe all to God; we must keep nothing back from God (which we do by sin or selfishness); and we must be glad to offer our acts to God that *He* may use them. Else they remain merely ours, and supernaturally unfruitful.

EPIPHANY.

Introit. Mal. iii. Behold, the Lord, the Lord is come, Kingship is in His hand, and Rule, and Government; Ps. lxxi. God, entrust Thy judgeship to the King. Thy justice to the Royal Son.

Prayer. O God, who to-day didst reveal, at the guiding of a star, Thy Sole-Begotten to the heathen, graciously grant, that we who already have learned of Thee by faith, may be brought through to the contemplation of the vision of Thy sublimity.

The *Epistle,* from Isaias lx, calls on Jerusalem to "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, darkness covers the earth—thick darkness, the peoples: but upon thee hath arisen the Lord, and in thee shall His glory be seen. And the heathen shall walk in thy light, and kings in the splendour of thy sunrise." He continues by bidding Jerusalem to watch how all the world is making its way towards her. The *Gospel* naturally (Mt. ii) relates the history of the coming of the Oriental sages with their gifts.

Gradual. Isai. lx. All they from Saba shall come bringing gold and frankincense, proclaiming praise to the Lord. Arise, shine, Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord

is risen upon thee. Alleluia, alleluia! Mt. ii. We have seen, in the East, His star, and are come with gifts to worship the Lord. Alleluia.

Offertory. Ps. lxxi. Kings from the West and the Isles shall bring gifts: kings of the Arabs and the South shall bring Thee presents: and all the kings of the earth shall worship Him, all peoples shall serve Him.

The Silent Prayer. Graciously look, we pray Thee, Lord, upon the gifts of Thy Church, whereby no more is offered gold, or frankincense or myrrh; but that which by those gifts was figured, now in deed is offered, and received, even Jesus Christ.

Communion. Mt. ii. In the East did we see His star, and are come with gifts to adore the Lord.

Post-Communion. Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we may with the understanding of our cleansed minds possess the effect of that which with solemn rite we celebrate.

The Epiphany was one of the very oldest feasts of the Church, almost to be ranked with Easter and Pentecost. Perhaps the best reason to be found by us for this is, that *we* are those Gentiles to whom the revelation has been made. Our race is an ex-heathen one. We do not belong to the people originally chosen by God to be the channel of His special revelation. Yet to-day we are in possession of all His riches: we are adopted into sonship and are become co-heirs with Christ. We might then use Epiphany-tide to reflect on that supreme King-ship of His which indeed the Mass never permits us to forget; and gladly offer ourselves to our appropriate loyal subjecthood.

The Sundays that follow the Epiphany can be used by us to work this notion out somewhat, making sure that in our personal and social life, in thought, in behaviour, in judgments and in affections, we are permitting its full scope to Christ's unique Lordship.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE EPIPHANY.

Introit. On a throne aloft saw I a Man seated, whom the throng of Angels worship, hymning in unison—"Behold, the Name of His Empire is for ever!" Ps. xcix. Exult unto God, all thou earth; serve the Lord in gladness.

Prayer. We pray Thee, Lord, to further the prayers of Thy suppliant people with Thy heavenly affection, that they may alike see what should be done, and be strengthened to carry out what they have seen.

The *Epistle* (Rom. xii) is the beginning of the last part of St. Paul's letter to the Romans. In it he bases all morality, for the Christian, on the fact of our union with Christ, and, in Him, with one another. Beginning with our bodies, he says, Make *them* the living Gift that God can gladly accept: and adapt your minds, too, no more to public opinion, worldly estimates, but to God's. And while you are indeed One Body in Christ, yet are you many members within that selfsame body. So you will not fail to fulfil your own function, nor yet endeavour to undertake what properly belongs to another. This unity in variety is possible for the Christian as for none other, because of his incorporation in Christ. The *Gospel* relates the Finding in the Temple (Luke ii), perhaps just because it is a Childhood incident, but able to be connected by us with the epistle as teaching that the one supreme obligation upon the Christian is to do *his* work at each moment as God desires him to do it. The *Communion* repeats sentences from this Gospel, and the *Gradual* and *Offertory* are cries of praise almost wholly made of words already familiar.

The Silent Prayer. May the Sacrifice presented to Thee O Lord, give us life, and keep us safe.

The Post-Communion. We suppliantly ask Thee,

almighty God, that Thou wouldst deign to allow us, whom by Thy sacraments Thou dost renew, to serve Thee with behaviour that pleases Thee.

This then is a sort of basic Mass. The terse prayers ask that we may (1) have sight, (2) have courage: that as we have been supernaturally created, so we may be preserved in that life: and that our daily acts may not be out of keeping with this supreme act of Communion. The epistle provides us with the foundation for all right Christian behaviour, and the gospel poignantly impresses on us Christ's own example given.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Introit. Ps. lxv. Let all the earth adore Thee, O Lord, and hymn to Thee; let it sing hymns to Thy Name, O Thou most High. Sing triumph to the Lord, all thou earth, sing hymns to His Name: give glory to His praise.

Prayer. Almighty everlasting God, who dost govern things alike of heaven and of earth, mercifully grant the entreaties of Thy people, and permit peace to our times.

The *Epistle* (Rom. xii) follows on that of last Sunday. It illustrates what St. Paul had meant by "diversity of function" in the Church, and then pours forth a stream of tiny phrases, each enshrining some duty of right nature for which Paul would like the motive to be the supreme Christian one of our unity within Christ. (Incidentally, it throws light on the Apostle's own rich and lovable nature, which *expresses itself* by means of this stream of lovable thoughts and wishes that comes so rapidly upwards.) The *Gradual* picks up the notion of "good" human nature, but insists that it is God who has healed it.

Gradual. Ps. cvi. The Lord sent His Word, and healed them: and snatched them from their corruption.

Let God's merciful actions give praise to Him, and His wondrous work done unto the sons of men. Ps. cxlviii. Praise the Lord, all ye His Angels; praise Him, ye His powerful ones!

The *Gospel* (John ii) is the story of the miracle of Cana. At first, the Epiphany was rather the feast of the Baptism than of anything else—this was the first definite Manifestation of Christ to the world. Then the miracle of Cana was added to this; then almost any event that involved "manifestation" (which is what Epiphany means), such as the raising of Lazarus, and soon His Birth, and the visit of the Magi. It was this last event that came to predominate, especially in the East. In our note upon the *feast* of the Epiphany, however, we thought it was better to emphasise the fact that the manifestation was to the pagans, rather than the mere notion of "manifestation" as such.

Offertory. Ps. lxv. Exult unto the Lord, all the earth: sing praise to His Name; come and listen, and I will recount to you, O all you who fear the Lord, what great things He hath done to my soul.

The Silent Prayer. Sanctify, O Lord, the gifts we offer Thee, and cleanse us from the stains of our sins.

The *Communion* is from the Gospel.

Post-Communion. May the working of Thy power, we pray Thee, Lord, increase within us; that invigorated by divine sacraments, we may by Thy gift be prepared to embrace what they promise.

This Mass, like the next two, illustrates the power of the divine King over material things, so that having thus "manifested" that power, He may persuade us the more confidently to look to Him for the strength we need to carry out properly even the demands of "right" natural behaviour.

On the third, fourth, fifth and sixth Sundays after Epiphany, the *Introit, Gradual, Offertory* and *Communion* are all invariable. They can then act as a kind of frame-work to those Masses and suit very well this notion of the Kingship of Christ. (See p. 81.)

Introit. Ps. xcvi. Adore God, all ye His Angels; Sion heard, and rejoiced; and the daughters of Jerusalem exulted. The Lord is King; let the earth rejoice, let all the islands be glad.

This brief chant involves all creation: for the Angels stand for the whole spiritual world; Sion, Jerusalem, for the Chosen People; the "islands," mysterious places for the long un-seafaring Hebrew, came to stand for distant parts in general, especially towards the West—pagan lands, therefore. We can then think of ourselves as the *now* Chosen People; or, as among those "heathen" who too, were to be called to God. In the former case, the appeal to worship God goes out to those who are still pagans now; in the latter, to ourselves, ex-pagans.

Gradual. Ps. ci. The heathen shall reverence Thy Name, O Lord, and all the kings of the earth Thy glory. For the Lord hath built up Sion, and shall be seen in His majesty. The Lord is King . . . (as above).

Offertory. Ps. cxvii. The right hand of the Lord hath worked power; the right hand of the Lord hath exalted me: I shall not die, but live, and relate the works of the Lord.

Communion. Luke iv. They were all marvelling at the words proceeding from the mouth of God.

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

The *Epistle* again continues Romans xii, and makes still clear what Christian behaviour ought to imply. Courage is given us by the Gospel (Mt. viii) which

relates the cure of the leper and of the paralytic boy, and the Prayer earnestly implores the infusion of that divine power.

The Prayers. Almighty everlasting God, look in kindness on our weakness; and stretch out the right hand of Thy majesty to protect us. May this Sacrifice, O Lord, we pray, cleanse away our sins; and, for the due performance thereof, may it sanctify the bodies and the souls of us Thy subjects. We pray, Lord, that they to whom Thou lavishest permission to make use of such high mysteries, may by Thee be graciously and genuinely adapted to their effects.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

The *Epistle* (Romans xiii) sums up the Christian moral life in the words: "The fulness of the Law is Love." Anyone who really understands how much is demanded by true Love, whether of God or of man, will not be astonished if once more a miracle is related in the Gospel (Mt. viii) capable of sending us with full trust to God, who shall enable us to carry through an else impossible task. The prayers emphasise both our own weakness and God's power.

Prayers. O God, who knowest that we, set amidst such dire perils, cannot, for human frailty, keep our feet grant us health both of body and of mind, that what we experience in consequence of our sins, we may defeat by Thy succor. Grant, we pray, almighty God, that the offering of the gift of this sacrifice may ever cleanse our frailty from all ills, and defend it. May Thy gifts, O God, disentangle us from earthly delights and ever renew us with heavenly nourishment.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

The *Epistle* is an incomparably beautiful passage from St. Paul's letter to the Colossians (iii), a passage

which, like those from Romans, exhorts the Christians to a perfect behaviour based upon their union in our Lord. Possibly because we feel, at this point, that we are too unlike St. Paul's ideal to call ourselves decent Christians at all, the *Gospel* (Mt. xiii) reminds us that our Lord *expects* us to be mixtures of good and ill and probably still to be so when we die. And the prayers most sympathetically assume our weakness and do not disguise it in their appeal to God.

Prayers. We pray Thee, Lord, guard with unremitting affection Thy family, so that since it reposes on nothing save the hope of heavenly grace, it may indeed ever be defended by Thy protection. We offer Thee, O Lord, the victim that appeaseth Thee, that so Thou wouldst not only in pity absolve our sins, but Thyself direct our hesitating hearts. We pray Thee, almighty God, that we may lay hold of the effect of that salvation whereof through these mysteries we have received the pledge.

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany.

The *Epistle* (I Thess. i) is one from St. Paul to some of his dearest and earliest converts—the Thessalonians. They are an encouragement to him, because of their fidelity and also because of the good repute that was theirs throughout the Church, and also to us, since we see how wide may be the influence of the weak. The *Gospel* (Mt. xiii) picks up this notion and tells the parable of the mustard seed. Hence this final Mass seems to me to suggest that we must now pass beyond even the thought of our private sanctification to that of our diffusive work—there is no doubt at all but that we must *wish* to influence or at least know for certain that we are bound to do so, even though

unaware of it. The prayers are straightforward and simple.

> *Prayers.* Grant, we pray, almighty God, that by continually musing upon what is reasonable, we may carry through both in word and work what pleases Thee. May this offering, we pray, O God, cleanse us and renew us, govern us, and protect us. We have fed, O Lord, on heavenly sweetness; we pray, that we may ever be eager for That whereby we truly live.

It will now be of advantage to re-read and re-pray, all the Masses said since Christmas inclusive. It is obvious that they "meet" in the fact of their being "Childhood" Masses up to a point; but they are more than that. Our first duty would then seem to be to use them as an inspiration towards knowing more about Christ's human, earthly life. I fear we are accustomed to picking out only a few incidents in that life and remaining unfamiliar with all manner of details that the Gospels bequeath to us. We ought to know every possible detail concerning that life. None the less, we are wise to see it all in a certain generalised way—I mean, that it was emphatically a life of poverty and work and hiddenness; and that if wealth, self-indulgence, or notoriety are made possible for us by circumstances, well, these were not what Christ chose. Nothing more exquisite, yet stripped, more tender, yet austere, than the Holy Birth and Childhood can be pictured. But further, in the midst of this Christ's *Kingship* is again and again emphasised, especially in the latter group of Masses; He imposes Himself upon us, and we, as Christians, cannot embark on a life governed by a totally different set of ideals from His own. His chosen manner of life is definitely an *example.* The Church then feels so sure that after

this space of musing on God's most intimate and human love, we will allow to her full freedom to give us some drastic lessons—for we have to recognise that our lives are very different both exteriorly and at their fountain-heads, so to speak, from this vision of Christ's own. Therefore she leads us gently up to the season of *Lent*.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

The Church's Vigils prove that she does not like us to rush headlong into a Feast. We have thought, not too fancifully, we hope, that already we can see one season of her Year preparing for the next, and the next shining back into what precedes. The Year is organic. And now we observe that the Church does not want us to embark even on a penitential season unprepared. Thus at least we can consider the curious semi-penitential period, Septuagesima to Ash Wednesday. The vestments are purple: Gloria in Excelsis is not said: but not yet do we fast. Christmas and Epiphany are so joyous, that despite the many little warnings we have received from the liturgy, we might be almost tempted to think that the work was all finished: we are saved—at any rate we can throw the whole business on to God. But no.

Introit. Ps. xviii. The wailing of death surrounds me: the pains of hell are round about me! So, in my distress I called upon the Lord, and, from His holy temple He heard my voice. I will love Thee, Lord, my strength; the Lord is my foundation, my refuge, and my rescuer. Man lives his life in the midst of the dying: part of life's background is, the possibility of self-ruin and eternal death. Affrighted, the soul rushes to God: God hears it: it cries out in an ecstasy of trust and gratitude.

Prayer. We pray Thee, Lord, in clemency grant the prayers of Thy people, that we who are justly for our sins cast down, for the glory of Thy Name may mercifully be delivered.

The Epistle is from St. Paul's very grave ninth and tenth chapters of his first Letter to the Corinthians. To the frivolous, unstable citizens of Corinth he writes that they have *entered the lists:* their name is down for the great Christian race. Very well: that means *severe training.* It means disciplining life with the one end in view; running, not without goal; fighting, not as beating the air. Even an apostle—even Paul—can preach to others and *yet* not have salvation guaranteed. Look at the Jews! They all had their "baptism"; their "Communion." Yet with the most of them, God was not well pleased.

The Gradual forthwith consoles us. Ps. ix. O Thou our help when we need Thee, and in distress—let them that know Thee ever trust in Thee, for Thou abandonest not them that seek Thee, O Lord. The poor man shall not be utterly forgotten; the endurance of the poor shall not perish finally: arise, Lord, and let not man prevail.

Tract. Ps. cxxix. From the depths do I call to Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. Let Thine ears be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant. If Thou wilt scrutinise iniquities, O Lord, Lord, who shall support it? But with Thee is forgiveness, and because of Thy Law, I do support Thee, Lord.

The Gospel (Mt. xx) adds to our consolation: even they who begin late have their *full* chance: complete success shall not be denied to them.

Offertory. Ps. xci. Good is it to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise unto Thy Name, Most High!

The Silent Prayer. We pray Thee, Lord, accept our

gifts and prayers, and cleanse us by the heavenly mysteries, and graciously listen to us.

Communion. Ps. xxx. Make bright Thy Face above Thy servant, and save me in Thy mercy; O Lord, I shall not be put to shame, for I have called on Thee.

Post-Communion. May Thy Faithful, O Lord, be consolidated by Thy gifts, that by receiving them they may seek them all the more, and by seeking them may find them for eternity.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Introit. Ps. xliii. Arise, why sleepest Thou, Lord? arise—repulse us not utterly; why turnest Thou away Thy face? dost Thou forget our affliction? Our heart cleaves to the dust: arise, Lord, help us, and rescue us. O God, we have heard—our parents have told us.

The Introit seems almost desperate: it breaks off almost with a gasp. What is it that we have thus been told? Certainly, that God can and will rescue His chosen. Why then stays He so hidden?

Prayer. The prayer asks of God, reminding Him once more that we make no pretence, even, of trusting in anything that *we* can do, to defend us against all dangers by the protection of him who taught the heathen. . . . Why this sudden apparition of St. Paul in a collect? The *Epistle* turns our mind to him, as to a supreme example of personal work and (as we know) of holiness, and *yet,* as a man continually subject to some stress and anguish so fierce that he calls it "an angel from Satan," sent to "buffet" him. Thrice he asked God that this "sting for his flesh" (whatever be the exact meaning of this distress of his) might leave him; and ever was he answered: "My grace is sufficient for thee"; for the triumph of the Christian's supernatural life is best seen when the human ingredients within which it energises are at their weakest. Our

Christian strength reaches its perfection and best displays itself precisely in the sphere of human weakness. I will even, then, "make boast" of my intrinsic shortcomings, since all the more, because of them, I can claim the *power of Christ to live and act within me.*

Gradual. Ps. lxxxii. Let the heathen know that *Thou* art God; Thou alone art Highest over all the earth. My God, whirl them away! make them like chaff before the wind.

Tract. Ps. lix. Lord, Thou hast shaken the earth and confounded it, But now heal its distress, for it is shaken. Let them fly before Thy bow, that Thy chosen may be freed.

In all such prayers, we are right to concentrate on the heathen, earthly element in *ourselves.* That is what we want, first, shaken, and then reconstructed. Once the fabric of our self-sufficiency is dislocated, God will have His chance. The *Gospel* (Luke viii) gravely reminds us of that, keeping ever the balance between panic and presumption. Not every heart is yet *ready* that "Christ should live in it" and produces His work.

The *Offertory* (Ps. xvi) asks that our steps be fixed in God's paths, so that they never stumble; and the *Silent Prayer* begs that the Gift we offer may ever "give us life, and keep us living." The *Communion* reminds us that we can "renew our youth" and its gladness at God's altar, and the *Post-Communion* for the third time asks that we may be renewed, and then, act in accordance with our newness.

QUINQUAGESIMA.

The *Introit* is the cry for help now seen as normal at this season. The prayer asks, as often, that we

be rescued from prisoning sins, and kept from all evil.

The *Epistle* is the famous thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's first Letter to the Corinthians. Paul has been exhorting them to welcome all God's gifts, but especially those of a higher nature and utility. Then suddenly he shuts the whole perspective of graces up, and soars out into the supreme world of supernatural Charity. This one gift is so tremendous that it outweighs everything else, nay, without it, the very best of everything else is valueless for our eternity. The man who, rebel against God, wilfully disunited with God, should "give all his goods to feed the poor"; the man who, disunited from God, should acquire all human wisdom, is not alive Christ-wise at all. Why, even those supreme virtues, faith and hope, belong somehow to the childhood of our Christian life. For, we know now but in fragments: we see God but dimly, as by means of a mirror through created things, human ideas: and the mere fact that we hope, means that we do not adequately possess. *Then* we shall know as we are known—without anything between us and our God: and, seeing Him thus, shall possess and enjoy Him for ever. Faith then and hope shall have come to an end. But Love, never.

The *Gospel* begins by our Lord's forewarning the apostles (Luke xviii) of His imminent passion—supremest proof indeed of Love—but they could not realise it, could not "see" what He meant or how He could mean it. His miracle was needed, even for them. Forthwith the blind man is cured, and an object-lesson is given. Christ will *give* sight. But notice—in answer to the man's irrepressible outcry. We must then pray and pray to understand. But is not such prayer itself

a gift from God? It is. Therefore let me on the spot use that amount of good will (it, too, God's gift) that is at the moment mine, to beg Him to help me to make Lent one long outcry that I may *see,* and then, as the Missal keeps urging me to ask, that my life may be in accordance with my vision. For, if I ask like *that,* I shall certainly be heard.

(*Communion.* Ps. lxxvii. They ate, and were wholly satisfied, and God brought them their desire: they were not cheated of their desire!) But each answered prayer brings new responsibility. Pray with courage, but with much humility.

I have written at some length about these three Sundays, because it will be impossible to do so in the case of each of the Lenten Masses. Nor is there any need to, for their meaning is sufficiently identical to create in us a *mood* rather than to supply new thoughts each day. In those Masses, then, sometimes little more than a line or two need be commented on, and the gist of epistle and gospel indicated. As for the preparation for Lent, then, it can be regarded as a warning that the Christian life, though optimist and with success assured at the end of it, is no easy-going thing. There is *sin* in the world, and in me: its fibres shoot far into my nature: it is out of the question for me to conquer it all alone: and literally impossible is it for me to obtain, by myself, the one thing that matters eternally, namely, that supernatural charity which unites me with God and means eternal bliss. With these thoughts, then, in my mind, I approach Lent, recognising my absolute need of God, my duty of imploring His succour, and my certainty of obtaining it if but I do not deliberately reject it.

LENT

Ash Wednesday. It is certainly the Catholic's duty to receive the ashes upon this day, if he can, and to do so with full activity of mind and will. The key-note of the ceremony is struck forthwith—it is mercy, not misery. The Church turns your eyes quick as may be and by preference to God, and not self.

> Ps. lxviii. Hear us, O Lord, for tender is Thy mercy; according to the multitude of Thy mercy, so look Thou toward us. Save me, O Lord, for the waters are come in to my very soul.

The prayers used for the blessing of the ashes keep striking the same note, together with that of human tragic need:

> Almighty, everlasting God, spare the penitent, be kind to the suppliant . . . bless these ashes and make them of service to all who humbly implore Thy holy Name, and accuse themselves well conscious of their wrongdoing . . . and suppliantly and obstinately cry out for Thine unclouded affection. . . . O God, who desirest not the death of sinners, but their repentance, in great kindness look upon the frailty of our human state and bless these ashes, that we, who know we are but ashes and know too that because of the offence of our iniquity we must return to dust, may be enabled to win pardon for all our sins, and, in Thy mercy, the reward promised to the penitent . . . and pour forth richly the grace of Thy blessing, that Thou wouldst fill us with the spirit of contrition, so that Thou mayest effectively bestow on them what we do justly ask, and wouldst decree that Thy gifts may be for ever ratified and remain for ever inviolate.

The repentance of the pagan city Ninive is recalled, and sentences from the ancient sorrowings of the Jews are read, and the very grave warning is heard—let us

amend what in our folly we have done wrong, lest our Death-day come suddenly on us unawares, and we seek for time for repentance but cannot find it.—"Grave," because experience seems to show that the enormous majority of death-beds are not the scene of any startling change. The dying are too tired. The habitual state of mind displays itself, or *no* state of mind, and the will simply relaxes, and life is allowed to drift out of the failing grasp. The dying have renounced, and hold no more on to anything.

As the ashes are put on the forehead of each, the priest says: "Remember, man, that thou art dust, and unto dust shalt thou return." And this part of the liturgy of Ash Wednesday concludes with the prayer that we may with holy fast inaugurate the defences of our Christian warfare, so that we, who mean to fight against spiritual crimes may be reinforced by the succours of self-discipline.

The Mass follows. Its *Introit* is faithful to the ideas of the day:

> Wisd. xi. Thou hast pity upon all, O Lord, and hatest naught of that which Thou hast made, and disregardest the sins of men if they repent and sparest them . . . have mercy upon me, Lord, have mercy upon me, for in Thee my soul doth trust.
>
> *Prayer.* Grant, Lord, to Thy Faithful, that the solemn observation of the Fast may be undertaken by them with suitable devotion, and carried through with undisturbed absorption.

The *Epistle* and the *Gospel* both enjoin the duty of penance (Joel ii; Mt. vi), the gospel naturally emphasising above all that purity of intention without which no such act can serve. Of the rest of the Mass little is specially significant, save that we should attend to the words in the Tract; Ps. cii and lxxviii,

Lord, requite us not according to the sins that we have done, nor according to our iniquities. Lord, remember not our sins of times gone by: let Thy mercies overtake us speedily, for very poor are we become. Help us, Lord, our Saviour, and for Thy glory's sake, O Lord, deliver us, and be propitious to our sin for Thy Name's sake.—For these words are so often repeated during Lent, that it is clear that the Church set great store by them and regards them as characteristic. We have now the first example of the Prayer for the People (p. 48):

> Look graciously, Lord, on them who bow low before Thy Majesty, that they whom Thy divine gift has refreshed, may ever be nourished by such heavenly aid.

THURSDAY AFTER ASH-WEDNESDAY.

The *Introit* contains the words we should do well never to forget: "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and Himself shall He take charge of thee:" and the *Prayer* is a favourite one in Catholic supplication: "God, who by guilt art offended, and by penitence appeased, graciously attend to the prayers of Thy suppliant people; and the scourge of Thy wrath that for our sins we merit, turn aside." "I have heard thy prayers, and have seen thy tears," says Isaias to the tormented king (xxxviii) and the *Offertory* reiterates its injunction that we should cast our care upon God, with the certainty that *He* will care for it and for ourselves. Thus acted the centurion (Mt. viii) who, though a pagan, showed more faith in our Lord than, said He, He had found in Israel itself.

The *Post-Communion* is unusual: "We have received the blessing of the heavenly gift: suppliantly, God almighty, we implore Thee that the Self-same

may be cause to us both of sacrament and salvation." The gift is Christ. May He then prove not only to have originated (as indeed He did) this recurrent reception by us of sacramental Communion, but to have worked *that* in us, through it, which shall make us persevere and reward us with an everlasting bliss.

FRIDAY AFTER ASH-WEDNESDAY.

Again, in the *Introit,* the note of Mercy sounds. The prayer asks that sincere minds may accompany exterior fidelity to the Church's rules. The tragedy that our penance may be wasted, and we prove hypocrites, is driven home by a passage from Isaias, positively ferocious in its irony. (lviii.) You fast—yes—and you seek me (in the temple)—and you say: Why does God not attend? Because even on your fast-days, your selfishness is seen. You are raking in all your debts. You go from fasting forth to lawsuits and disputes; iniquitously you strike men with your fist. Do not fast as until to-day you have done, if your voice is to be heard on high. Is this the sort of fast that *I* have chosen—that a man should afflict himself all day long? and bow his head down like a reed? and put sackcloth and ashes under him? Is *that* what you call a "fast" and an acceptable day to the Lord? *This* is more the fast that *I* have chosen—Loose the bonds of wickedness, break the bands of the yoke, set free those that are broken down, and lift off every load. Share thy bread with the hungry, and bring the poor and the homeless into thy house, if thou seest a man naked, clothe him, and scorn not thine own flesh (for each such man is our brother). Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy healing shall swiftlier appear, and thy righteousness shall go before

thy face, and the glory of the Lord shall gather thee. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord will hear; thou shalt cry, and He will answer: "Here am I." "For I am merciful," saith the Lord, thy God. These last words, added in the Latin, emphasise once more this "key-note" of God's pity. Few practices can be more useful than to take such a passage and to lay beside it one similar in general meaning from the new Testament, as the Missal now does (Mt. v, vi). Certainly our Lord does not treat us slackly: if the Christian loves them only who love him, salute his brothers only, how is he better than the scorned tax-collector, nay the pagan? *They* do *that.* And our Lord unfolds His ideal of Christian love, but adding that its deeds should be done in secret, or at least, in that simplicity which simply desires that *God* should be pleased.

An incidental light is thrown on the Church's mind as to fasting by the *Silent Prayer;* it asks that our fasting may win for us the power of a *prompter* self-control. Deliberate self-discipline makes easier a complete and immediate self-possession even under sudden stress. This physically utilitarian point of view is not disdained by the Church. Indeed, in the prayer for Saturday after Ash Wednesday, she frankly says that fasting is meant for the cure of our bodies too, and I do not think that this refers merely to the schooling of bodily lusts, but, to the general improvement in health that should follow discipline in food and drink.

Saturday after Ash Wednesday.

The *Epistle* continues yesterday's (Is. lviii). If you do away with oppression, with pointing the finger of scorn, with wanton talk—then shall your dawn come, then shall your desert of a life become a fountainous

garden . . . then in your person shall places immemorially desolate be built up, and you shall lay foundations for a long posterity, and you shall be surnamed "The restorer of the fence," the "Guide to Paths of Peace." And if similarly you truly sanctify your feasts, and do not seek merely your own pleasure in them, but God's, your well-being is assured. The gospel (Mark vi) tells, without obvious reason, of Christ walking on the waters and causing the storm to cease. I suggest that we find but little taste for the help in religion, and tend to observe its enactments conventionally, like those Jews, and feel as if our Lord were little more than a ghost, because we do the minimum. If once we could put forth but a single act of complete faith, of total unselfishness, then we should find that Christ is so *substantial* and alive, that to have touched so much as "the fringe of His garment" has transformed us.

The *Post-Communion* ratifies the explanation of the previous Thursday's: it asks that that which is to us a mystery (p. 37) in this life, may imply a succour for eternity. The *Prayer* "over the people" is the same as that for Septuagesima Sunday.

We may then, not altogether arbitrarily, I think, regard these first days of Lent as leading us very gently, trustfully, towards that great bracing of the spiritual life which the rest of Lent must effect.

FIRST WEEK IN LENT.

SUNDAY. At first sight this Mass might seem to be about to repeat merely the main notions of the previous four days—the mercy of God, emphasised before the mind is turned to the notion of serious effort. In a sense it does this, filled as the Sunday Mass is with the

rustle of Angels' sheltering wings. And the *Introit* adds nothing special, nor does the sedate *Collect*, save for its valuable hint that *abstinence* is never an end in itself, but only as a preliminary to the positive and constructive. However, St. Paul, in the 6th chapter of his second letter to the Corinthians administers a kind of shock by his sudden warning that it is possible to receive the grace of the Lord in vain, and the Missal makes quite clear, the grace on this occasion is simply Lent itself. As so often he soars into a description of the Christian life so superb that it would provide a month of meditations by itself. If *this* is what we are to become, the effort will surely be so tremendous as to demand all the support that Angels can provide. Nor does the gospel deny this. Christ went through His forty days, and throughout was tempted by Satan, and at the end was so exhausted that "Angels came, and ministered unto Him." In a word, the Church expects very much from Lent, and very much from us during Lent. The prayers of the season are indeed embarrassing: they keep making us tell God that we abstain from animal food, and speak of the chastising and even maceration of our flesh. We know very well that we do little enough of these: dispensations are of course given, which make legitimate our abstaining from abstinence: the upshot is, that Lent is very easy. But the fact remains that even so the Church wants its consequences to be great, and expects even that we shall run spiritual dangers during it. Our first duty would be, to ask ourselves whether we expect anything to happen from our Lents, just as it might prove difficult for us to define what precisely we expect to happen along of our repeated invocations during Advent that God would "arouse" His power and "come," and

at Pentecost that the Holy Spirit should "come"—Veni Sancte Spiritus! This impassioned, reiterated invocation must involve some consequence. What, then?

On the Monday, Christ Himself once more administers to us a fierce shock. The *Epistle* from Ezechiel (xxxiv) is so tender with its exquisite picture of the Lord's shepherding of His people, and the accumulated promises of its close—"What had perished, I will find; and what was cast out, I will lead back home; what was broken, I will bind; what was weak, that will I make strong":—that we feel lulled once more to security. Suddenly, in the *Gospel* (Mt. xxv) our Lord turns on us—"Have you done any of that? Fed the hungry? visited the prisoner? given welcome to the lonely? No? Then to Me you did it not."

Tuesday. The *Collect* is startling. "May our mind blaze with desire of Thee, that chastens herself by means of the maceration of the flesh." A difficult prayer to pray sincerely. The *Epistle* is a famous chapter of Isaias (lv): "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found: call ye upon Him, while He is near. . . . The Lord will have pity on the penitent, for He is rich in pity. Not like My thoughts, are your thoughts, nor your ways, My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so are My ways above your ways, My thoughts above your thoughts. And even as the shower descendeth and the snow from heaven, and returneth not again, but thrilleth the earth, and drencheth it, and maketh it to grow, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall be My Word that cometh forth from My mouth: it shall not return to Me ineffectually, but shall do all that I willed, and shall prosper in that whereto I sent it." And forthwith, we are shown our

Lord (Mt. xxi) this time no more telling us what He expects from us externally, but drastically cleansing that Temple of God which our minds should be. Mind first and foremost, but also body, we Christians are God's temple: with a scourge of cords Christ sets Himself to cleanse it.

Wednesday (Ember Day). This Mass in its double reading places before us the Law, in the person of Moses, and the Prophets, in that of Elias, and in two dramatic incidents each is seen spending his forty days of fasting. And just as, perhaps, we are encouraging ourselves to persevere with our Lent, since without some such discipline it is manifest that never has anyone done great things for God, the Gospel (Mt. xii) terrifyingly warns us that after a soul-cleansing, the evicted demon will seek to return, bringing with him others, worse than himself. And the climax is put to our disconcerting by our Lord's declaration that even relationship with Himself—even the unique relationship of physical motherhood and sonhood, would avail nothing whatsoever were spiritual communion of will to be absent.

Thursday. The *Epistle* (Ezech. xviii) is a passionate assertion of the individual responsibility of each living human man or woman. Bitterly the prophet rejects the proverb: "The fathers ate sour grapes, and the teeth of their sons are put on edge,"—so fierce is this rejection as almost to deny any human solidarity at all. But these one-sided assertions, needing (and always, later on, receiving) due qualification, are characteristic of the Hebrews. Is this same lesson what the Church expects us to derive from the episode of Christ and the Cananean woman (Mt. xv)—the pagan who extracted from Christ's apparent obduracy

the "crumbs" that even, she urged, "the little dogs" may eat? Not because a man was a Jew, was he secure. More than once Christ had to explain that He had not found such faith—"nay, not in Israel." What you *are* counts; not the mere fact of belonging to the Elect. Not being "a Catholic," but being a good Catholic. Not "living in Bethlehem," but "living well in Bethlehem."

Friday (Ember Day). So outstanding are the *Epistles* and *Gospels* of this week's Masses, that the Liturgy in all the rest of those Masses does little more than supply a kind of "running accompaniment" to their doctrine. Here, Ezechiel continues with the utmost relentlessness to work out his theme that "the soul that hath sinned, *it* shall die"—unless of course, it repents. In the *Gospel* the story of the man waiting to be cured at the Probatic pool (John v) reminds us indeed that Christ *can* cure, but that the responsibility of being cured is great: "Go, sin no more, lest a *worse thing* befall thee."

Saturday, also an Ember Day, reminds us by its many Readings of that fact, and asks that we should pray for those about to be priested. The theme of these readings seems to be gradual widening of outlook, from individual to people, and from people to heathen and the world at large. This already acts as a corrective to any *too* individualistic an outlook which the previous days might have suggested. The reading from Wisdom (Eccli. xxxvi) has especially fine sentences. "Lift high Thy hand over the alien heathen, that they may see Thy power. For as in full sight of them, Thou hast been worshipped amongst *us*, so in our sight shalt Thou be made great amid them, that

they may know Thee, even as we have known, that there is no God save Thee, O Lord. Make new Thy signs, make new Thy miracles!" This part of the Mass contains for the first time the very precious prayer—"Prepare, O Lord, our actions by Thine inspiration, and carry them on by Thine assistance, that every word and work of ours may always begin from Thee and through Thee be similarly ended." A prayer useful for almost every hour of the day. While the *Epistle* is not different in tone from many that precede it, the *Gospel*, which is repeated next day, Sunday, tells of that Transfiguration of our Lord, in which He gave an *enormous minimum* of encouragement to the Apostles and therefore to us. For, it occurred between the dingy stretch of ordinary life and work, and the frightful scenes of the Passion, of which He forthwith warned them, and it should have sufficed to make them see what He really was underneath it all, and what He meant to make of them, and what He was actually making of them, even though they seemed to themselves unchanged. After all, who has ever noticed his own body growing? At most, one may see that one's soul *has* grown, but this demands either God's special illuminations, often withdrawn so suddenly that you can scarcely (St. Teresa said) so much as believe you ever had them, or a very delicate study and scrutiny of your spiritual state which few can give and perhaps are wise not to seek. For it means endless preoccupation with self. Anyhow, after this drastic week, layfolk, and new-ordained priests, and the celebrant, may be glad to finish with this mysterious gospel of hidden good and power energising all the while beneath the surface.

SECOND WEEK IN LENT.

The first week full of Lent may then have given us a considerable shock. But life is not lived as a series of shocks. A quiet but very serious attention to detail has to follow the general vision. A genius really is a man who can possess the general vision and grasp details and forget neither the one nor the other. Not being geniuses, we ask to be helped to keep what is needed before ourselves, and we ask of what certainly is the work of a sort of collective genius, namely the Missal.

On the Second Sunday of Lent, after the normal sort of *Introit*, the *Prayer* very straightforwardly proceeds—

O God, who seest that we are totally destitute of power, protect us within and without, so that we may be defended against all evils to our body, and cleansed from crooked thoughts in our mind.

St. Paul (I Thess. iv) tackles at once the two most concrete topics imaginable—bodily purity, and honesty in business—"Happy are they," echoes the *Tract*, "who keep their eye on justice and act justly all the time," and the *Gradual* has already most earnestly implored the help man needs to observe that other difficult Commandment. If we like, the gospel of the Transfiguration can now suggest to us how transfigured personal and social life, even exteriorly, would be, were we able to carry out the Apostles' direction in these two points. Half the tragedies of the world come from impurity; and the appalling misery of millions is due to men, rich or poor, having as real motive in life: How much they can get. Hence comes every fraud and tyranny.

MONDAY. The *Prayer* asks that "Thy family, which for the chastising of the body abstains from food, by pursuing justice, may fast from guilt." We may use the epistle (Daniel ix) as carrying forward the last thought of yesterday, namely, the social consequences of private sins, for Daniel's touching prayer concerns Jerusalem, the devastated city, over which God's name was called, and he confesses that nothing but the people's sins had been responsible for this. And this devastation of Jerusalem was nothing to the spiritual desolation of the People itself, to which Our Lord (John viii) alludes, with its result that when our Lord did come, they could not recognise Him. St. Paul and St. John have much to say of the blinding, cauterising effect of a course of deliberate sin.

TUESDAY. The *Prayer* asks that God would in goodness help us to the end of Lent, "that what, at Thy bidding, we have understood we ought to do, by Thy working within us we may fulfil." Taken together with the *Gospel*, the *Epistle* (III Kings, xvii, and Mt. xxiii), explains how the spiritual life, which we want to begin, after the contemplation of self and of world devastated by sin, and after our sense that we hardly know *where* to begin, *always* takes its start from docility. Against all human probabilities, the Sidonian widow obeyed the prophet and found that in the midst of famine she did not starve: Our Lord goes as always deeper, and expresses the whole theory of obedience to authority, of official position and interior and exterior submission. We certainly need, in the Christian life, a strong element of sheer obedience. The Catholic Faith does not consist of private impressions and opinions; and Catholic moral life is not the product of each individual conscience. Consciences need train-

ing, quite as much as muscles do, and advance is impossible without more, or less, Direction.

Wednesday. The *Prayer* of Mardochaeus (Esther xiii) which forms the *Epistle* is as poignant as that of Daniel last Monday, but frankly, cannot be said to have any special bearing save that along with Fasting Prayer must always go; and as for the *Gospel* (Mt. xx) it contains some of the gravest irony of the whole New Testament. Almost immediately after Our Lord's declaration that He was now moving no-whither save to His passion, the mother of the apostles John and James (so little had our Lord's grave words reached the intelligence of those two spirited and hot-headed youths) came with them to ask that they might have the two chief places in the Government of that earthly kingdom they still imagined the Messias meant to found. Our Lord neither rebuked nor despaired of them. He asked whether they could drink from the cup that He would drink from—that is, share His destiny. They said they could. He did not abash them. He agreed that they should. Only, he added, things like what *you* ask, are not for Me to offer. . . . The most beautiful and forceful *Post-Communion* seems to me to look towards this incident: "O God, who lovest innocence and dost restore it, direct towards Thyself the hearts of Thy servants, that, once they have caught fire with the flame of Thy Spirit, they may be found both firm in faith, and forceful in effect." Without doing violence to this Mass, let us agree that those who do submit (see the last Mass) to obedience, are far more likely to escape the mastery of moods, and to be prudent in the hours of enthusiasm, and persevering in those of despondency or fatigue.

THURSDAY. We may use this Mass to remind ourselves that people in this life always do look to something for their support or assistance. The absolutely self-reliant man exists mostly in fiction. People look to the wealthy, the officially powerful, or even to the "intellectual" man or theory of the hour. In the *Epistle* (Jeremias xvii) the insecurity of any such foundation or buttress is emphasised; in the *Gospel* (Luke xvi) about Dives and Lazarus, the same reversal of human estimates is most vividly portrayed. Spiritual principles alone are permanent. Work constructed according to them, within one's self, or by one's self around one's self, alone is lasting. Few indeed but need guidance and encouragement in their attempt so to live. The *Post-Communion* puts good words, therefore, upon our lips: "May Thy grace never desert us, but make us wholly dedicated to the service of Thee, and from Thee ever earn us help."

FRIDAY. Lent is alleviated in two ways. One is, the constant allusion to God's mercy of which we have already spoken; the other is, the diverting of our attention from our sins to Christ's atonement for them, that is, to His Passion. To-day, for the first time, yet surely unexpectedly soon, the Passion begins to glow red through the heavy clouds of the beginning of Lent. The *Prayer* asks that fasting may purify us till with limpid minds we may approach the "coming solemnities." The *Epistle* (Gen. xxxvii) tells of that selling of Joseph into Egypt which was to prove, in time, the means to enable his father and brethren to survive and has always been used as type of the distant work of Christ. The *Gospel* alludes to that Work still in parable—"This is the heir: come let us kill him" (Mt. xxi). And even on Saturday the Missal makes its

approach rather by hint and allusion than by direct declaration.

The Saturday *Epistle* tells of two brothers, of whom the younger, Jacob, twice supplanted the elder, Esau (Gen. xxvii). The *Gospel* (Luke xv) again tells of two brothers, of whom the elder was jealous of the younger, the prodigal, when he was received home again. In this incomparable story, are we to concentrate our attention wholly on the prodigal? Our Lord did not mean us to do so, nor does the Missal thus juxtapose the two pairs of brothers for nothing. Whatever be the immediate application of the parole of the prodigal, intended by our Lord to be made by His first hearers, He will have known that we, who know Him better still, will have inevitably passed even without His asking us explicitly to do so, to reflecting upon *our* "elder brother," which He, eternal Son of God, is in regard to us, adopted sons. Violent indeed is the contrast! Here, no question of selfish feeling or dealing; here no jealousy nor rancour. He *went* into that "far country" of our sinful earth, and thence bought us back (who were fain to sate ourselves upon swine's food) at the price of His own blood. The *Communion*—"You should be glad that this your brother, my son, was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found." And indeed, may that joy of His Heart be fulfilled because of us. Indeed, "may Thy sacrament which we have fed upon, O Lord, penetrate into our heart's innermost, and forcefully make us true participators in itself."

THIRD WEEK IN LENT.

Sunday. We said that the Missal has not arranged its Masses as, for example, the meditations in a

spiritual book would be arranged. They are not following a reasoned course towards a climax. Any such interpretation therefore put upon them by us is artificial, and meant only to prevent the Masses seeming perfectly similar and endlessly repeating themselves. Nor can we impose such an "order" on to the Lenten Masses in any detail, without being unwarrantably far-fetched. In this third week therefore we do not suggest that anything special is to be seen, but that the Church does definitely intend that we should be working hard at ourselves during Lent, and gives us alternate encouragement and warning, as well as reiterates the sorts of things at which we ought to work. In the *Epistle*, then, of to-day (Eph. v) St. Paul once more emphasises the very basic virtue of chastity, and just as the Hebrews used to describe idolatry as a "wantoning away from God"—sheer infidelity to Him who had espoused the nation to Himself—so Paul insists that impurity is nothing less than a worshipping of idols, whereas our homage to Christ, better than brother and the very Spouse of His Church, demands that our spiritual self-dedication to Him should reflect itself right down into our bodily behaviour.

The entire *Gospel* for Ember Wednesday (Luke xi) is then repeated, so great is the value attached to the profound psychological warning that our Lord gives us in it. There is always danger of reaction, the greater any mental or moral effort; and if that effort have been made with any self-sufficiency, and without reliance on grace, the reaction is sure to come, and the moment the strain is taken off, as it will be at Easter, we shall almost certainly slip back and find a second recovery far harder to make.

Monday. The *Gospel* (Luke iv) gives us here no

less grave a warning. Our Lord, alluding to the story of Naaman told in the epistle, says that there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus, but none was cured, but only the pagan Naaman: and only the pagan widow received the prophet's visit and miracle, though many were the widows in the chosen people. The possibility is grave that others than Catholics may be corresponding with such graces as God gives them, better than we are with those overwhelming privileges that belong to us. At one blow, all right to judge others, let alone to think with contempt of others, is removed from us; and a tremendous sense of our responsibility with regard to our own graces must be engendered in us—graces of which Lent itself has already been seen as a superlative example.

Tuesday. In the *Epistle* (IV Kings iv) another story concerning Eliseus is told, and the *Gospel* (Mt. xviii) deals with one's relations with one's neighbours, especially in the matter of forgiveness. We are to forgive, and to go on forgiving. "Seventy times seven times" means "always." Is then the miraculous oil in the *Epistle*, the oil that did not stop flowing till every receptacle was filled, a symbol of this everflowing mercy and gentleness? It may be so, nor has the virtue of Christian unselfishness, far transcending philanthropy, been spoken of in detail in these Lenten Masses. Probably too the Church wishes us to realise, in this group of Masses, the spirituality of her own doctrine by means of contrasting with it the best of the Old Testament. This is obvious in the next Mass.

Wednesday. The *Epistle* relates the giving of the Law in Exodus xx. Then our Lord (Mt. xv) displays the travesty of even that Old Testament religion which was what the Pharisees had to offer. The Church is

quite conscious that we may make a travesty of her own rules for fasting and the rest, if we do not carry out the material injunctions in the proper spirit.

THURSDAY. But still more obviously is this to be seen in the Masses that follow. Even Jeremias is heard, in the *Epistle* (c. vii) insisting with his contemporaries that it was waste of time for them to say, complacently, that they had the Temple of the Lord among them. If you live virtuously, says God to them, *then* I will live, I too, in your midst. The material temple profited them not at all, so long as their works were not spiritual. Perhaps we can see in the *Gospel* history (Luke vi) of some of our Lord's miracles, coupled with His assertion that His primary duty was to the Jews, a still deeper version of the lesson that it is idle to belong to the Chosen Race if your life be not in harmony with the technical privilege. And that the Jewish life was not so, is best proved by the fact that they rejected our Lord, and could not recognise Him for what He was.

FRIDAY. Upon Friday the same notion is set forth still more vividly by the juxtaposition of the Old Testament miracle, when Moses drew water from the rock (Num. xx) and the 4th c. of St. John, and our Lord's explanation of the living water that *He* meant to give; and finally, on SATURDAY, the story of Susanna (Dan. xiii) is set beside that of the Woman taken in Adultery (John viii), thus challenging us to compare the profundity and spirituality and *savour* of the two incidents, and the prophet's and Christ's treatment of the whole topic of sexual sin. No one can fail to feel into how different an atmosphere the whole thing is lifted. The *Silent Prayer* and the *Post-Communion* are exquisitely adapted to the main thought of this

Mass. "Grant . . . that this sacrifice may ever cleanse, and then defend, our frailty from all evil"; and, "grant that we be numbered as among *His* limbs, with whose body and blood we have been in communion." Here is the whole process of Christianity. It cleanses from sin: it establishes in virtue: it mystically unites human nature with the person of Jesus Christ. I think then that we can usefully seek, during this third week in Lent, to attend more and more to our motives, and to their progressive purification and spiritualisation.

FOURTH WEEK IN LENT.

SUNDAY. Even this Sunday does not at first sight supply any new idea or develop the Christian system of self-correction. And again, rightly, because the Missal *can* only deal in the universal worship of God, and seek in general to put His worshippers into a right mood towards Him. Each individual has to examine and cope with his own soul. The unmistakable primary point on which the Lenten Liturgy insists is, that we must be each of us doing something towards this, else we miss the grace of Lent. A mere technical observance of the rules for minimum fasting or abstinence does little save produce a legal correctness; while a certain merit is acquired by any piece of obedience carried out with the right motive. Little that is interior or that counts substantially is effected by abstaining twice in the week instead of once. Thereafter, the themes used by the Liturgy are not arranged in a particular order and exhausted one after another, any more than in an opera one theme expressed by one instrument is used and thereafter neither that theme nor that instrument is used again: nor any more

than in a landscape all of one colour is massed together at one end of it, then another colour used, and so on in gradation across the scene. New themes keep being thrown up, and old ones recurring: new colours are blended with the old ones and all are there till the finish. Thus the liturgy, having stated very firmly the theme of Mercy, goes on very gravely with the fact of sin, the possibility of conquering it, the Christian duty of conquering it; the ideal of virtues—especially the basic ones of personal chastity and social union, which so definitely includes honesty (and after all, business and pleasure make up most men's lives)—the *motive* for virtue, which is nothing less than that as Christians we have incorporated ourselves into Christ, so that what we do to our neighbour we do to Him, and, in a true sense, what we, incorporated into Him, do, we make Him do. "Will you take the limbs of *Christ*," says St. Paul, "and unite them to a wanton?"

Do not think that this sort of idea is "too high" for the average Christian. It is only explicitly stated here and there in these Masses: but, as we have seen and shall see, the Masses insistently remind us that Christ has introduced something essentially more spiritual and supernatural than the Jewish legalistic religion. We have to make very sure that our religion is not an "Old Testament" one, merely made up of moral dictates imposed under heavy sanctions by God. Meanwhile, by twice using the gospel of the return of the evicted devil to his cleansed home, along with others worse even than himself, the Church warns us most definitely against the possibility of reaction due to a feverish, excited, self-sufficient asceticism; and how careful are these Masses, dramatic as they are and will increasingly become, to avoid the sensational. Indeed,

those who love a rather sentimental religion, much adorned, and appealing to superficial emotions, find these Roman Masses bare and even dull. Yes: they have no word-painting, or fiery descriptions of hell, nor any passionate appeals for suffering nor suggestions of savage penance. They are all the better for that, and let us school ourselves, perhaps, especially during Lent, to catch the taste, enter into the mind, of our Missal.

The *Gospel* of the Mass for the 4th Sunday in Lent, ends with our Lord's significant flight, lest they should take Him to make Him an earthly monarch. The *Epistle* is one of those pages from St. Paul (Gal. iv) which, when read detached from its context, or even in its context, almost exasperate our modern taste. We wish he would be simpler! Yet his contrasts and their applications are indeed elaborate, yet accurate. Recalling the history of Abraham and his two sons and their mothers, Paul says: Agar, the slave-woman, bore (in Arabia) Ishmael, according to the flesh (that is, without any special intervention of God), to slavery. (Contrast.) Sara, the free-woman, bore (in Sion) Israel, by virtue of God's promise, to freedom. Apply these two histories. The Synagogue, a Slave, bore (on Mount Sinai, where the Law was given) the Jewish Folk, according to that Law, to slavery. (Contrast.) The Church, who is free, bore (in Jerusalem) Christians, by virtue of Faith, to freedom. The upshot of this is, that tremendous as was the superiority of the Synagogue, that is, the Jewish Church, over the pagans, yet her legalistic religion was slavery compared to that spiritual, free, faith-based religion which is ours.

Monday. Again *Epistle* and *Gospel* present us with

the great contrast between Old and New dispensations. The ugly story in the former, enshrines a moral and is to the glory of Justice: but is not the whole conception almost frivolous compared to the doctrine of that noble passage in St. John (ii) which begins with the cleansing of the Jewish Temple by Christ, His substitution of Himself for that material building, and ends with that profound declaration that *this* Judge has no need of so much as a witness to ensure the righteousness of His verdicts—He *knows* what is "in man"? Thank God that our Lord, who knows what is in us, as God, knows it too by experience, as man: nor is that knowledge used merely for judgment's sake, but for sympathy's sake, and we have no mere High Priest who does not know how to sympathise with our infirmities, but He was tested at all points, just as we are.

TUESDAY contains another contrast between the Law and the Christian gift. Even during the giving of the Law the Israelites were proving how little able they were to obey it, and our Lord shows how after all those centuries even the legalists had to make compromises and develop a casuistry to ensure external appearance of correctness. When they asked how it was that He had His knowledge, He needed but to make one answer—He had what He had, because He was it. The thing that has been substituted for that old Law, even as for the Temple, is Christ Himself.

WEDNESDAY. In each of the two *Epistles* (Ezech. xxxvi and Is. i), each of singular beauty, cleansing as by water is mentioned; but observe that in the gospel it is not so much purification that is implied by the miracle quoted from John ix, as enlightenment. It is the *mind's* eye that is to be cleansed. Yet it is worth

remembering that in the early Church baptism was very often known as the Enlightening. You are, as Christians, to see more and deeper than the pagan sees. Perhaps, during this Lent, you have been sighing: "Would that I could *realise* these things as well as just believing them." To realise the spiritual view, we certainly need help: pray for it, in this Mass.

THURSDAY. To-day and on Friday, two Old Testament resuscitations of dead persons are prefixed to narratives from the gospel—the restoration to life of the son of the widow of Naim, and of Lazarus. St. John whose gospel is henceforward more and more used by the Liturgy never leaves us in doubt but that the historical events narrated by him are to be used for spiritual doctrine and forces us back and back to the supreme doctrine of all, namely, that Christ has come to give a Life to the world, compared to which even that good natural life we live by, is as death. "*I am* the Resurrection and the Life."

SATURDAY. In the *Gospel*, Jesus reiterates the fatal fault of those who judge merely according to what human eye can see. "I," says He, "am the light of the world." Only by using Him for our light, shall we understand the true life—and no wonder, since it too is He—"In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men." No one can live properly in the dark. "You must say to those that are in the dark," God says to Isaias (the *Epistle* is Is. xlix) "Be ye illumined!" and the exquisitely tender passage ends with unforgettable words. "Can a mother forget her child, that she have not pity on the fruit of her womb? Even though she should forget, yet will not I forget thee," saith the Lord. Impossible, then, to feel despondent over the huge task set to us in Lent.

PASSION-TIDE

Passion Sunday. Just as Lent had its preface, so has Holy Week. In our churches, purple veils cover images, pictures, and even crucifixes. It is as if the Church said to us: "It is certain that one thought is preoccupying you. All you need is not to be distracted. So little do you require to be reminded of the Crucifixion, if you are according to my 'mind,' that I can safely leave you to your own thoughts." The less we feel we can sincerely admit that such indeed is our habit of mind, the more by means of the Missal and in every other way must we help ourselves towards it. Yet not even now is the Passion the only or even the main topic of the Liturgy. It is as though the music of the Mass is being enriched constantly, yet by a phrase at first hardly perceptible, or by one new instrument slowly but persistently coming to the fore. But in another way the orchestration of the Mass, so to call it, develops and complicates itself, and shifts indeed into a new key. Hitherto, the words of *Introit, Offertory, Gradual, Communion,* have, during Lent, been set upon the lips of the faithful and penitent soul. Now you must definitely, when possible, hear them spoken as by Christ. I say, "when possible," for most of them are words of psalmist or of prophet, and it is only now and again that the personality of Christ as it were compenetrates that of the human author, though at times it so floods through all that he says as to obliterate him quite. The Church has never hesitated to hear the voice of Christ *in* the voice of the inspired writers, and in the Liturgy, especially during the next fortnight, we should be quick to catch His accents.

In the Mass for Passion Sunday, then, you will hear stated once, and once only, the great Passion-theme, but unmistakably. We have had many contrasts, lately, between Old and New. Here, the entire sacrificial system of the Old Testament is—not rejected, but acknowledged as being no more than a type of that perfect Sacrifice now offered, namely, Christ Himself. The *Gospels* henceforward relate incidents leading up to the Jews' will to slay One whose words they could no more endure. Here, greater even than Abraham does our Lord claim to be, seeing that "before Abraham came into existence—I AM."

Monday. The *Epistle* from Jonas iii, though keeping to the theme of repentance, yet, simply because it is *about* that prophet, cannot but remind us that Our Lord Himself used his story to illustrate His own death and resurrection, and the *Gospel* (John vii) contains the definite statement that Our Lord had but a short time yet to remain upon the earth. The Passion comes looming up like a thunder-cloud over these Masses, as indeed you feel it doing throughout the Gospel of St. John.

Tuesday. Students of the Liturgy, whether Missal or priest's Office, may sometimes be bewildered by their putting on our Lord's lips so often words that imply that He asks to be *rescued* from His doom. Surely He came to it and endured it voluntarily? He did: yet His human nature resented, fiercely and agonisingly, the appalling havoc that was to be wreaked upon it. And His mind was in anguish over the sins that in a mysterious way He took upon—almost, into—Himself. During His Agony, He kept saying: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Hence not only the verses from psalm or prophet are full of such cries, but

Epistles like that for Tuesday or on Thursday are concerned with liberation. The *Gospel* for Tuesday again displays the encroaching shadow, and Jesus goes up to the feast "secretly," refusing to trust Himself to his fellow-countrymen.

WEDNESDAY. Is the *Epistle* (Lev. xix), so concerned with a number of small ethical behests, that it may prepare us for our Lord's great challenge. "My *works* bear witness to Me." What witness is borne by ours? At least, in the gospel, with its terrible proclamation that "I and the Father are one thing," make us feel that the end cannot be distant.

THURSDAY. And to-day, after the magnificent and tragic prayer of Azarias, comes the episode of the woman's anointing our Lord's feet with spikenard, and though it is quoted from Luke vii, I cannot but think that the Church wishes us to pass in thought to that anointing which St. John narrates, where our Lord adds that she "did it for My burial." Not for me here to identify or dissociate the two stories—the mind cannot but pass from the one to the other, and the fragrance of the episode is one of funeral incense. The *Silent Prayer* is so beautiful as to need quoting:

> "O Lord our God, who hast ordered that by preference in these mere creatures, which Thou didst make for the succour of our frailty, gifts should be established unto Thine own Name also, grant, we pray, that they may form both a help for our present life, and an efficacious sign of our eternity."

FRIDAY. Meditate the most dramatic prayer and protestation of Jeremias (xvii) in which quite definitely our Lord's voice is to be heard: and thence pass at once to the *Gospel* (John xi) with its mighty principle unwittingly laid down by Caiaphas, that one man

ought to die for the people, and the definite plot that ensued for the arrest of Jesus.

Saturday. A final contrast, before we enter into the direct study of the Passion. Jeremias xviii, appealing to God for help, against the plot of the Jews against himself, cries out that God knows, surely, "all their intrigue against me, for my death," and invokes retribution upon them. No comment is needed on the *Gospel* (John xii) in which Jesus, well aware of all that was being prepared against Him, confesses that "unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies," it remains solitary—unproductive. "But if it dies, it bears much fruit." That beneath this serene acceptance of His death, who shall deny that there was real anguish of heart "Now is my soul troubled . . . What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour! Yet for this very hour came I into the world . . . " and (how characteristically, if you study our Lord's sayings in St. John) he adds what at once the Jews misinterpret. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to myself." They thought that He meant some manner of Messianic ascension into the clouds, and were puzzled by their belief that the Messias should remain always, king upon the earth. But, says St. John, He was alluding to the manner of death by which He should die. In this manner therefore are we led up to Holy Week.

Palm Sunday.

The Liturgy begins with the singing of the Antiphon Mt. xxi.

> Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord. O king of Israel, Hosanna in the Highest.
>
> *Prayer.* O God, whom with mind and heart to love is

righteousness, make manifold upon us the gifts of Thy unutterable grace; and do Thou, who hast, in the death of Thy Son, made us to hope what we believe, cause us through His resurrection to reach whither we are straining.

The *Reading* relates the giving of the Manna (Ex. xv, xvi) and it is hard to see why the passage is chosen save because of the mention of palms as growing where the Israelites halted. It will serve, if we see in their hurried flight from Egypt and its comparative luxury, a triumph, despite the desert in which it set them, and, in the manna, the substitution of a spiritual food for a gross material one. The stripping off of the material may have to precede the gift of the spiritual, and the interval may be an arid one. The halt by the palms, and the Procession of Palms, mark the halt between an old life and a new divine event.

After this Reading, a *Gradual* is sung, consisting of the episode of Caiaphas's evil counsel. Then, the history of the Entry into Jerusalem is read as a *Gospel.* There follows a series of admirable prayers, in the midst of which is interposed a preface. For the history of this, as for that of the further ceremonies of Holy Week, special books must be consulted. Here I hope to suggest only the spirit that belongs to this part of the Liturgy.

"Increase, O God, the faith of them that hope in Thee, and mercifully grant the prayers of Thy suppliants; let Thy manifold mercy come upon us, and let these sprays of palms (or olives) be blessed; and as, foreshadowing the Church, Thou didst make Noe numerous, when he left the ark, and Moses, coming forth from Egypt with the sons of Israel, so may we, carrying palms and olive-branches, run forward, rich

with good works, to encounter Christ, and through Him enter eternal joy. [Then follow the customary responses at the beginning of *Prefaces.*] Truly right and just is it that we should give thanks to Thee, O God, who findest Thy glory in the devisings of Thy Saints. For to Thee Thy creatures render service, since Thee they acknowledge as sole Creator and God; and all Thy handiwork doth praise Thee, and Thy Saints do bless Thee, for that great Name of Thy Sole-Begotten do they before the kings and potentates of this world with free voice confess." And the *Preface* passes as usual into the *Sanctus.* Five prayers follow: the first recalls the dove that returns to the ark bearing an olive twig, and asks that these sprays may be blessed to our service. The second: "O God, who dost gather what has been scattered, and conserve what Thou hast gathered bless these boughs, and make them serve our usage." The third is of a sublime beauty:

O God, who hast so marvellously related and coordinated things, that even by means of inanimate creation Thou hast willed to exhibit the method of our salvation, grant, we pray, that the reverent hearts of Thy faithful may wholesomely understand what was mystically meant by the exterior fact that the crowd inspired by heavenly light, went forth to meet the Redeemer and spread branches of palm and olive underneath His feet. For indeed the branches of palm looked forward to His triumphs over the Prince of Death, while the twigs of olive allegorically proclaim that the Anointing by the Spirit has arrived. For even then, that fortunate throng of mortals realised that our Redeemer, in His sympathy with human unhappiness, was intending to fight on behalf of the whole world's life with the Prince of Death, and by dying, to win

His victory. That is why it escorted Him and did Him that service, which should make manifest in His person all triumph and victory, and richness of mercy. This, both event and its significance, we with full faith keep in mind, and Thee, Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, through the same Our Lord Jesus Christ, most suppliantly do beg, that in Him, and through Him whose members Thou hast willed we should be made, we may both carry off a victory over the empire of Death, and be made partakers in His glorious resurrection.

In the fourth *Prayer*, as in the first, the Church recalls that olive-sprig that the dove brought back to the ark, and sees in it a symbol of peace, and in the fifth, as in the second, regards the palm as symbol once more of victory. Then, after the incensing of the palms, the priest says:

O God, who didst send Thy Son our Lord into this world for our salvation, that He should stoop low to us, and raise us back to Thee, for whom, too, on His approach to Jerusalem, that the Scriptures might find fulfilment, the crowd of believing folk with loyal devotion spread their clothes together with palm branches in the path, grant, we pray, that we may prepare for Him a path of faith, and therefrom, when all stone of offence and stumbling-block shall have been removed, our works may grow green before Thee with the leaves of righteousness, that so we may follow in His footsteps. And in a final prayer before the Procession, the priest prays that we may imitate the innocent enthusiasm of the Hebrews, and acquire the merit that they did.

The Procession then moves forward, and during it the narrative of Palm Sunday from St. Matthew is

sung, together with Antiphons made up partly of scriptural words, partly of liturgical cries, such as:

> "This is He, who was to come for the salvation of the People, this is our Salvation and the Redemption of Israel. How great is He, whom Thrones and Dominations haste to meet . . . Hail, King, constructor of the world who art come to redeem us. The heathen proclaim the Son of God, and voices sound heaven-high to the praise of Christ. With the Angels and children may we be found faithful, acclaiming the Conqueror of Death."

And amid other hymns and antiphons the procession returns home.

We cannot deny that the Missal attaches much importance to this Procession and very much hopes that we shall like it and long to take part in it. The Roman spirit has always liked prayer-in-action. Also, associated prayer. It never thought of a "congregation" as a number of individuals juxtaposed inside a church and secretively occupied with who knows what private devotions. Perhaps we must not quarrel too much with the reticent North. At least we shall not have the impertinence to criticise the happy tumultuous processions of the Latin races. We shall be wise to imitate the almost naïve belief of the Missal in the sincerity and "innocence" of the first Palm Sunday crowds. I fear too that the mediæval symbolism of some of these prayers may be "lost upon" us. Provided at least we recognise that it is a loss. When these prayers were written, and in general until our "modern" times, men were ready enough to see "meanings" in things. It is no gain, that to-day the sense of symbolism is almost quite lost. It simply means that a large part of the world has become meaningless. Men see a palm branch *as* a palm branch

merely. The men who wrote the Missal were no less clear that a palm branch was a palm branch! but it could "stand for something" to them: it generated thoughts in their minds: it lifted up their wills on the wings of imagination. Their life was thereby far richer than ours too often is.

Palm Sunday. More than ever in these Masses does the voice of David, heard in the psalms, become the voice of each human soul, and then suddenly allow that of Christ to be heard across it.

Introit. Ps. xxi. Lord, set not Thy succour far from me: look unto my defence; rescue me from teeth of lion and the wild oxen's horn. God, my God—look towards me. Why dost Thou abandon me? Between the tale of my sins, and my rescue, is a great gulf set.

Prayer. Almighty everlasting God, who that the race of men might have an example of humility to imitate, didst cause our Saviour to take flesh, and undergo the cross, graciously grant, that we may not only possess the lesson of His Passion, but fellowship in His Resurrection.

The *Epistle* is that marvellous passage of St. Paul to the Philippians (ii) where, urging his converts not to stand on their rights as against one another, he bids them think as Christ thought—"who, though in origin and nature He was God, thought not the being treated as God should be a thing to be held to at all costs, but emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave, and became, to the outward eye, just what man is. And being displayed thus in outward form a man, he humbled Himself (yet further), and made Himself obedient unto death—yes, a death upon a Cross. *That* is why God hath utterly exalted Him, and enriched Him with the Name that is above all Names." The triumph with which this passage ends is echoed in the *Gradual,*

and the *Tract*, largely made up from the great Passion Psalm xxi, ends (as the most tragic of the psalms constantly do) in as exultant a cry of victory. Neither in the psalms, nor in the services of Holy Week, must we allow ourselves to treat the humiliation and defeat as *final*. The "Passion" according to St. Matthew is then chanted. The rest of this Mass needs no explanation.

MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

Prayer. Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we who amid so many difficulties faint in our weakness, may draw breath through the Passion of Thy Sole-Begotten Son.

The *Epistle* (Is. i) is clear, if we remember that in the person of the prophet it is the suffering and persecuted Messias who is speaking: the *Gospel* relates the anointing of Our Lord (John xii) in which He saw a preparation for His own burial. This Mass has none but familiar prayers, and the other parts of it explain themselves.

TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

In this Mass occurs the passage from Jeremias (xi) which contains a phrase often to be repeated in the Passion-liturgy. "Let us put wood in his bread and erase him from the land of the living." The original is: "Let us make away with the tree and the bread thereof, and etc." The "bread" probably means "the sap," and the whole expression means: "the man in his vigour"—"the green tree," as Our Lord Himself said. The Latin version having found the word "wood," or tree, in such a context, infallibly made the Christian commentators think of the Tree of the Cross, and so

this phrase has come to play such a part in Passion-liturgy.

WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

The mysterious *Epistle* for to-day (Is. lxiii and the last verses of lxii) is a challenge to our spiritual intelligence. The Hebrew prophet displays to us The Lord coming from Edom, His raiment crimson with the blood of the enemies He had slain. In this key the *Epistle* is written, prefaced and followed by verses that do not belong to the actual passage. It is for us to transmute it into the Christian key, and see how different is the saving blood of Christ. Yet Isaias has practically done this for us, since the second *Reading* is his incomparable 53rd chapter, which should be too familiar to us to need any comment. And indeed, to the Christian it explains itself.

The prayers have by now definitely and exclusively become Passion-prayers, and that "over the people" is one that will constantly be echoed in the Liturgy of the next few days. "Look down, we pray, O Lord, upon this Thy family, for which Our Lord Jesus Christ did not hesitate to be betrayed into the hands of evildoers and to undergo the torment of the Cross."

The Mass for *Maundy Thursday* contains three magnificent prayers, and otherwise is straightforward. "O God, from whom Judas received the penalty of his crime, but also the thief, the reward of his acknowledgment, grant us the full effect of Thine appeasing, that even as in His passion Jesus Christ our Lord paid unto each the wage they severally deserved, so unto us He may remove our ancient error and lavish the grace of His resurrection." (This prayer dates from times when the sin of Judas was almost the predominating feature

of this day's liturgical commemoration.) "We pray Thee, Holy Lord, Father almighty, everlasting God, that He may make our sacrifice acceptable to Thee, who by the tradition of to-day showed His disciples that this must be done as His commemoration." "Renewed by this food of Life, we pray Thee, Lord our God, that what we carry out during this our dying life, may be fulfilled for us by the gift of Thine immortality."

Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

The liturgy treated in ways suited to the devotion of different minds, can be read in many different books. Treated somewhat in the way proper to this book, it is published by the Catholic Truth Society, and so are the three services of Tenebrae. For these we have here no room.

It may suffice to say that the spirit of this part of the Missal is less suggestive of a meditation on the Passion of our Lord, than of a celebration of it. I mean, that for private meditation, we should linger, probably, over the exterior and interior details of that history. The Missal does indeed commemorate them, but does not precisely dwell upon them. It makes the Passion present indeed, yet almost more as a great Pageant of a divine Act prepared for since the world began, and in a thousand ways spoken of, hinted at, throughout distant ages. To be in sympathy with the Missal, we must see the Passion to some extent in this universal way. In the Stations of the Cross, in the Sorrowful Mysteries, in the Three Hours' devotion, or Maria Desolata, we may find what other food our devotion needs, yet none more strong nor guaranteed than this.

EASTER-TIDE

Easter-tide is a more difficult period than Passion-tide for most people to deal with because there is less in it that appeals to the imagination. And perhaps tragedy is always more enthralling than joy. Yet St. Paul says that "If Christ be not risen from the dead, we are of all men most miserable." Because we have pinned our faith to Him, and He would have failed us. God would not have recognised nor acknowledged His work; Death would have conquered; Grace would not exist; our efforts to rise above sin, selfishness, and weakness would be wasted. The essence of Easter is, that the Victory *has been* carried off: no manner of Death can defeat the triumphant Christ. Provided then we fight, we are fighting a battle in which we are bound to win. But if there is a battle at all, how can one mention victory? Certainly one can. For a defeated foe can fire many a shot and can wound and slay many a man yet. We shall probably get many a bruise, be mauled or even thrown many a time, before our manifold fight is over. But "in Christ" we *cannot* now be conquered, so that the only thing remaining is, to keep in Communion with Him. We separate ourselves from Him by Sin (hence the Easter Confession, which breaks down the "dividing wall"), and unite ourselves with Him in many a way, primarily Holy Communion. Hence Easter is indeed the moment to "make ourselves One" with Him—to enter into Communion with the proved Source of Life and Victory.

Introit. Ps. cxxxviii. I am risen, and still am I with thee: thou hast laid thine hand upon Me, alleluia; wonderful hath thine knowledge been made, Alleluia (thrice).

—Lord, Thou hast tested Me, and hast known Me; Thou hast known My down-sitting and uprising.

Prayer. O God, who to-day through Thy Sole-Begotten Son hast conquered death and unlocked once more for us the gates of eternal life, assist and further our prayers, even as Thou dost anticipate and inspire them.

The *Epistle*, I Cor. v, begs us to rinse out of ourselves that old leaven of malice and sin which makes us into evil bread. We are that unleavened bread which is to serve at Christ's Paschal Feast wherein He Himself is the Lamb. Let us then be mingled only with the leaven of loyalty and purity. The *Gradual* and brief chant contain and repeat well-known words—Ps. cxvii. "This is the Day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever. Alleluia, Alleluia. It is Christ who is sacrificed as our Pasch!" One of the rare surviving Sequences follows, with its strange broken rhythms and half-rhymes.

Paschal praises sacrifice, Christians, to the Sacrificed!
A Lamb the sheep did save; and Christ
Back to the Father, sinless, sinners gave.—
Death and Life clashed in mysterious strife;
Life's Captain, dead, now lives and reigns instead.
O Mary, say, what sawest thou by the way?
"The tomb, Life's futile prison; and the glory of Him risen—
I heard the angelic word: I bowed to see the bands, the shroud—
Christ my Hope is risen, and He is gone before you into Galilee!
Christ from the dead we know is truly risen!"
Victorious King, to us kind pity show. Alleluia.

The *Gospel* is the narrative of the Women's visit, Mark xvi.

Offertory. Ps. lxxv. The earth shook, and grew silent, when the Lord arose in judgment. Alleluia.*

The Silent Prayer. Accept, O Lord, the prayers of Thy people together with the sacrifice they offer, that what has been initiated by the paschal mysteries may avail us, by Thy working, unto an eternal remedy.

The *Communion* repeats part of the epistle.

The *Post-Communion.* Pour into us, O Lord, the Spirit of Thy charity, so that by Thy lovingness Thou wouldst make of one heart those whom Thou hast fed on Easter Sacraments.

EASTER MONDAY.

Introit. Ex. xiii. The Lord hath led you into a land flowing with milk and honey, and let the Lord's Law be ever on your lips.

Prayer. O God, who by the Easter Solemnity hast given healing to the world, we pray Thee, further Thy people by Thy heavenly gift, so that it not only may achieve its perfect liberty, but move forward to eternal life.

The *Epistle* (Acts x) is St. Peter's simple speech concerning the preparation for Christ, His death and resurrection, and consequent Kingship of the world. The *Gradual* is familiar, and the *Gospel* (Luke xxiv) relates the appearing of our Lord on the way to Emmaus. The *Offertory* and *Communion* have nothing special; the *Silent Prayer* and *Post-Communion* repeat yesterday's.

TUESDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

Introit. Eccli. xv. The waters of wisdom bare them up; he shall be established thereon and shall not drift aside: it shall carry them up for ever. Give thanks to the Lord, and call upon His Name: announce His works amid the heathen.

Prayer. O God, who dost ever increase Thy Church

* To save space, the Alleluias are not printed.

with new generations, grant to Thy servants that they may preserve in their life that mystery which they have laid hold upon by faith.

The *Epistle* is St. Paul's speech in Acts xiii leading up to the announcement of the Resurrection. In the *Gradual* come the appropriate words:

Ps. cvi: Let them now make profession, they whom the Lord hath redeemed whom He redeemed from the foeman's power, and from all the world did gather them.

The *Gospel* relates the apparition in Luke xxiv when our Lord impressed upon the apostles the physical reality of His resurrection. The *Offertory*, again (as we shall see) most appropriately cries out:

Ps. xvii: The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered His voice, and fountains of water broke forth.

The *Communion* has words that we can multiply into the notion of baptismal re-birth that has already been emphasised.

Col. iii. "If you be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ is throned on the right hand of God: have the taste for those "things above."

Wednesday in Easter Week.

Introit. Mt. xxv. Come, ye blessed by My Father, receive the kingdom that was prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Ps. xcv. Sing to the Lord a new song: sing to the Lord, O all you earth.

As usual the Epistle is an apostolic speech, from the Acts (iii), and the *Gospel* relates an appearing of our Lord, that by the lake Tiberias (John xxi). The *Offertory* and what follows passes definitely to the idea of Holy Communion. God opens heaven's gates, rains down the manna, feeds men on angels' food. Marvel-

lously thereby is the Church herself "fed and nourished." The *Post-Communion* asks that we, cleansed from all ancient taint, may, by the sacred partaking in God's Sacrament, be transferred into a new creation.

THURSDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

Introit. Wisdom x. "All alike they praised Thy victorious hand, O Lord; for Wisdom hath opened the mouth of the dumb, and hath made the lips of children eloquent. Ps. xcvii. Sing to the Lord a new song, for He hath done marvellous things.

Prayer. O God, who dost unite the variety of peoples within the acknowledgment of Thy Name, grant that among those who have been re-born from the baptismal font there be but one mind, one faith; and one piety of life.

The Mass pursues its way normally without need for explanation: the *Communion* (I Peter ii) sings:

"O People I have purchased, tell forth God's acts of power, He that did call you from the dark into His wonderful light.

FRIDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

Introit. Ps. lxxvii. The Lord led them forth in hope; He covered their enemies with the sea. Attend, O my people, to my Law: give ear to what I speak.

The Prayer. Almighty and everlasting God, who hast conferred the Easter Sacrament in the covenant that reconciles the human race, grant to our minds that what we profess and celebrate, we may in our actions imitate.

The *Epistle* (I Peter iii), to whatever discussions the details of its interpretation may give rise, is clear as illustrating the duty of Christians by the Flood. As Noe, with a few persons, came safe out of that living death, so we, snatched from the death of sin by the

mystical death of baptism, are pledged, as Noe pledged himself, to live in God's service, and God on His side ratifies His covenant that He will never forsake us. The *Offertory*, Ex. xii, applies the institution of the original paschal feast, on the occasion of the freeing of the Israelites from Egypt, to this Easter Feast of Christ's resurrection and the Church's renewal, and the new Christian's baptism.

SATURDAY "IN WHITE." (LOW SATURDAY).

Introit. Ps. xiv. The Lord led His people forth with joy, and His chosen with gladness. Give thanks to the Lord, and call upon His Name. Recount His works among the heathen.

St. Peter's magnificent words (I Peter ii) are read as the *Epistle*:

"My beloved; lay aside, then, all craft and guile and pretence, all envy and all backbiting, and, like new-born children, desire the simple milk of the mind, that thereby you may grow towards salvation, if but you have tasted —and indeed you have—that the Lord is sweet. To Him you have drawn near as to that Living Stone that men indeed rejected but that God chose and to It showed honour, and you yourselves thereon are upbuilded like living stones, into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. . . . You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people, a nation that God has won Him, so that you must announce His works of power, who called you from darkness into His wonderful light—you, who once were no people, but are now a People: who once could claim no mercy, but now have met with mercy."

The *Communion* continues this thought—Gal. iii. "You that have been baptised, have clothed yourselves with Christ."

The *Silent Prayer* and the *Post-Communion* both

emphasise the need of perpetuating the work which the Easter gift has inaugurated in us—

> "May the continuous working of our redemption be to us a cause of enduring happiness," "grant that by this aid to eternal salvation, the true faith may always be developing."

SUNDAY "IN WHITE" (LOW SUNDAY).

The *Introit* is from St. Peter's epistle above. The prayer recognises that the Easter festival is now finishing, but asks that in our life and behaviour we may for ever be keeping Easter. The *Epistle* (I John v) announces that what is born of God, conquers the world —and the world-victory is nothing less than our Faith. "Who is he who conquers the world, if not he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" And very rightly, the *Gospel* relates the appearing of our Lord to St. Thomas, and the apostle's profession of belief. And these historical but distant apparitions of our Lord look forward unto all generations, and our own, when Christ says that happy are they who, like ourselves, believe, though their eyes have never seen. The Church, triumphant in this testimony of her Founder, cries in the *Silent Prayer*:

> "Accept, O Lord, we pray, the gifts of Thine exultant Church, and grant that she to whom Thou hast given cause for such great joy, may receive from Thee the fruition of endless happiness."

We might consider that the Church was so almost delirious with joy over the Easter Festival, that she half felt it did not matter much what she *said*, and at any rate had need to invent nothing, but poured out her heart into Alleluias. For the actual words of much of these Masses seem, sometimes, pale and unimagina-

tive. On the other hand, there is a strong impression of *primitiveness* in these Masses. They live in the world of the Acts, of St. Peter and St. John. St. Paul appears far less than you might expect. You feel that the texts from the Old Testament are just the ones that would have come easily to the lips of the first Christians, and again and again you get the terse statement of what happened at the first Easter, just as the new converts of those days had it put to them. Nor can it be doubted but that Easter, more even than Pentecost (since it renewed itself in a sense each Sunday) would have set a liturgical tradition never easily departed from. So it would be wise to accustom ourselves to using willingly the very words of these Masses, and to trust that they will generate in us their appropriate mood.

But more than this. These Masses are permeated with the thought that at this time Neophytes are being baptised. The Church is being renewed with her brood of Christians. Her streets, for a whole week, are thronged with white-clad neophytes, who only lay aside their spiritual baby-clothes after Low Sunday. What are we to make of this, since the practice of Paschal baptism has extended itself to all the days of the year equally? We must certainly try to desire that all men should share our joy, and that the world should pour its children into their true home, where alone they come properly alive and are meant for ever to live, Christ's Church which is His Body. Above all, perhaps, we must seek to draw from our Easter Communion a new fulness of life. We need that reinforcement, especially if we have been treating Lent seriously. For, as we have seen, there is danger of reaction

and of slacking off. But Holy Week should have carried our Lenten resolution to so high a pitch that slacking off is out of the question at least at first. Perseverance is however difficult at all times: the tide will ebb. We have then assimilated into our very being the great Easter doctrine of Immortality, and that Christ *is* the Resurrection and the Life. We ask then to possess Him permanently, and actively, in our innermost, that for ever He may maintain what He has inserted, and develop what He maintains, and that the good gift of time may reach its perfection in an eternity still better.

It will be well, too, to attend to the notions of charity, which is the bond of unity, and peace, which is the state of loving union, on all three of which notions the Easter Liturgy insists and will insist.

And reasonably. If it is clear that Easter teaches the supreme lesson that not Death, but Life, is the very essence of the Christian Creed, certain consequences cannot but follow. If within a living body there is conflict, it is sick and at least approaches to death. If there is actual schism, and one part be cut off from another, one or the other dies, or both do. Schism and conflict are both prevented by active love —for what does love create but union? Many people say they cannot feel so happy at Easter as they feel sorrowful during Passion-tide. Probably that is because they try harder during the latter to do things appropriate to the season: during Easter-tide, they may not even see clearly *what* to do even should they want to do it. Radiant as is the feast there is a certain austerity about it, as there must be about everything that concerns us during this part of our life. And

the "thing to do" at Easter-tide, according to the Church's mind and that of the Missal, is courageously, cheerfully, to disregard or even stamp out of ourselves every single movement towards un-charity. If ever I should forgive injuries, make an end of quarrels, knit together broken ties, seek to give joy at my own great expense—this is the time. Passion-tide should have given me courage for this, and for anything.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Introit. Ps. xxxii. The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord: by the word of the Lord the heavens are made secure. Exult, ye righteous, in the Lord: joy befits the just.

Prayer. O God, who by the humility of Thy Son didst upraise the stricken earth, grant unending gladness to Thy Faithful, that those whom Thou hast snatched from the perils of unending death, Thou mayest cause to rejoice in never ending joys.

With this prayer go the *Silent Prayer* and *Post-Communion* prayers.

May this sacred offering, Lord, ever impart to us blessing and salvation; that what it hiddenly enacts, it may forcefully accomplish. Grant us, we pray, almighty God, that we may so possess the grace of Thy Life-Giving as to make our glory ever in Thy gift.

The *Epistle* is from St. Peter (I Peter ii):

Beloved, Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you may follow in His steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; when He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He was hurt, He threatened not; but He gave Himself over to His unjust judge, and Himself in His own body bore our sins, that we, dead to sin, might live to righteousness—by whose hurting, we are healed. Yes, you were like sheep astray; but now you are returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

The *Gospel* (John x) is that which tells of the Good Shepherd—the "real" "right" Shepherd, unlike all the false rival claimants. The Alleluia chant and the *Communion* repeat part of its words; the *Offertory* sings: "O God, my God, to Thee do I watch from break of day—in Thy Name lift I up my hands"—and the *Gradual* tells where, especially, the faithful heart can find Him—"the disciples recognised the Lord Jesus in the Breaking of Bread."

The thread of thought running through this Mass is easily laid hold of. The *Introit* strikes the note of God's loving kindness and our right to joy: joy is the note sounded again by the prayer, seeing that the Eternal Word of God has come down to us, that He may lift us high as His own heart: the Shepherd, St. Peter reminds us, has sought us so willingly through our wilderness, and has found us; and now, not only He knows us, but we Him, and in communion have the perfect access to Him.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Introit. Ps. lxv. Sing triumph to the Lord, all thou earth: sing psalm unto His Name; give praise to His Glory. Sing to the Lord—How terrible are Thy works O Lord! At the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall fawn before Thee.

Prayer. O God, who to the wanderer dost show the light of Thy truth that he may return into the road of righteousness, give to all those who rank themselves under the Christian name, to detest all that is alien thereto, and press hard after what befits it.

St. Peter (I Peter ii) implores us, as travellers through this world, to free ourselves from those attachments that clog our steps, and begs us also so to live that they who are not Christians may, so far from

having any just complaint against us, find that their very calumnies are rebutted by our behaviour. Though the Christian is conscience-free, let him not misuse that freedom as excuse for doing as he pleases merely: and St. Peter passes rapidly through the many difficult relationships that exist between man and man in human society. As for our Lord (John xvi), He prepares us for His imminent departure from this visible world, and warns us that during that interim, till He sees us again and we be "for ever with the Lord," we shall have much to suffer. But the world passes, as even He seems to pass; and when He returns, as earth's sufferings will not, He will bring a joy that no man shall take from us. And the *Silent Prayer* begs again that this offering may "quench these our earthly passions and instruct us how to love what is heavenly."

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

The *Prayer* returns to the special Easter-tide doctrine of unity, and is so beautiful and strong that no better prayer can be daily on our lips for the sake of the entire Church of God.

> O God, who dost make the Faithful to be of one mind and will, grant to Thy peoples to love that which Thou commandest, to desire that which Thou dost promise; that among the changes of this world, our hearts may ever there be fixed, where true joys are.

This tremendous prayer is lifted to a still greater sublimity in the *Silent Prayer*.

> O God, who through the worshipful intercommunion of this sacrifice, hast made us to share in one supreme Divinity, grant that we who have known Thy truth, may follow it up by lives not out of harmony.

The *Epistle* chosen to suit these marvellous prayers (St. James i) declares that every good and every perfect gift descends from the Father of all lights, in whom there is neither waxing nor waning, nor any change nor shadow. Freely He begot us into our new life by His Word of Truth—"the Life was the Light of men . . . He was the true light . . . Thy Word is Truth,"—it is good to link up such phrases as these, which the Apostles conspire to use—that we might be at least a beginning of His new creation, His Christ-world. Hence lay aside dissensions of all manner, pursues St. James, and all uncleanness—all adherences to self-worship of every sort, that you may assimilate that implanted Word, and grow into what you are now called to become. The Gospel supplements this doctrine by that of the Holy Spirit (John xvi). Our Lord insists that it is better for us that He withdraw His visible presence: it would hinder the work of the Invisible Spirit within us. Yet that Spirit will not be in any way *opposed* to Him or independent in its teaching of Him: what comes from the Holy Spirit comes too, from Himself: from Son, as from Father, He proceeds. And *He* now shall convict the world of what Christ convicted it—He in men's hearts shall make them realise that wilful unbelief is sin: He, and not now the visible Jesus, shall be making them realise what righteousness is: and He shall effect in practice the great judgment or separation between God's men and the world's—for the domination of the Evil Spirit is now over. This is not intended to be an exhaustive or authoritative explanation of these mysterious words of Christ: what He insists on is, that the Christian life is not now, as for many during His lifetime it has been, an affair of physical companionship merely, but

one whose fountain was interior, the Holy Spirit of God Itself "inhabits your hearts," as St. Paul says. At least we understand enough to make us already earnestly look forward to and desire the outpouring into ourselves of that Spirit, whose first official Giving is celebrated at Pentecost.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Prayer. O God, from whom all good things do come, grant richly to Thy suppliants that, by Thy inspiration, we may think what is right, and beneath Thy governing, may do it.

St. James (i) inculcates the necessity of bringing our action into harmony with our belief: however lofty our creed, it will translate itself into simple facts —aloofness from stain, and generous output of mutual affection. And the *Gospel* (John xvi) insists that if our Lord through His Apostles exhorts us to give, spontaneously He bids us *ask*. Hitherto, you have asked nothing in My Name. While He was visibly with them had they ever prayed "through Jesus Christ our Lord?" No: but henceforward, in no other way must the Church pray. No other irresistible argument with God is hers: *this* one she ever must now use. And taking Him at His word, the Church interposes between this Sunday and next Thursday, the Ascension, three Asking-Days.

THE ROGATION MASS.

The title of these days, in the Missal, is: On (the occasion of) the Greater Litanies. In pre-Christian times, the Romans used to go in procession round the fields upon three spring days, invoking the blessing of the gods upon the fields. So, for a special intention

(the riddance of red rust upon the crops) they used to do on April 25. The Church, eliminating the worship of false gods, kept up the practice of the April procession, which still takes place on that date, and fixed the three other processional days to the three days before the Ascension. This is like a tiny Advent before Christmas; only here, feeling the visible Christ is departing she pathetically tries to insert all her requests before He leaves. She uses upon them her great litanies, always a processional devotion. As for us, let us too use them for asking, in general, through the Saints' intercession, for anything we want, or that the world wants, buttressing ourselves with our Lord's own instruction about asking.

Introit. Ps. xvii. From His holy Temple, the Lord heard my voice, and my outcry in His presence reached His ears. I will love Thee, Lord, my strength; the Lord is my firm foundation, and my refuge, and my Rescuer.

Prayer. Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we, who in our affliction trust in Thine affection, may be Thy protection ever be fortified against all adversities.

St. James (v) in the *Epistle* insists that we should pray, and not only for ourselves, but for our neighbour, and not only for his temporal well-being, but for his salvation, for "the assiduous prayer of a righteous man availeth much." And indeed, we ought to pray for sinners, and know, that if we convert a sinner, we save his soul, and so blot out the multitude of his sins. A strong motive indeed! In the Gospel (Luke xi) our Lord urges us, with homely illustrations, to ask, and to ask till we receive. "If you, even though evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your father from heaven give

the Good Spirit to those that ask Him?" Exquisite link between this day of asking, and Pentecost, drawing so near with its supreme gift.

Ascension Day.

Ascension Day has its vigil, but there is nothing very special in the liturgy to mark it. Yet it is good to pay some attention, if we can, to vigils, since not only is it, as we have seen, a very ancient Christian tradition to do so, but the Missal manifestly wishes us to do so too. As for the Mass itself, upon Ascension Day, the *Introit* consists of words taken from the Acts, which will be read as *Epistle,* and a brief cry to the nations to rejoice.

> *Prayer.* Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that we who believe Thy Sole-Begotten, our Redeemer, to have ascended this day into heaven, may ourselves also have our minds dwelling amid heavenly things.

The *Epistle* is from the Acts and relates the Ascension. There is great dignity in the *Gradual:*

> Alleluia, Alleluia! Ps. xlvi. God hath ascended in triumph; the Lord, with trumpet-cry, Alleluia! Ps. lxvii. The Lord is in Sinai, in His holy place, ascending on high, He led captivity captive, Alleluia!

The *Gospel* relates the Ascension as St. Mark has it. The rest of the Mass surprisingly has nothing that specially befits the day.

Sunday in the Octave of the Ascension.

The *Introit* (Ps. xxvi) surely expresses admirably the mind of the Apostles, waiting for their Pentecost. It echoes too the petitions of our heart, still full of the instinct of the Rogations, and above all, of desire for the Holy Spirit.

O Lord, hear m yvoice, wherewith I cry to Thee—Alleluia! My heart to Thee doth say: I seek Thy face, O Lord; Thy face Lord, will I seek. Turn not Thy face from me—Alleluia, Alleluia! The Lord is mine enlightening and my salvation: whom shall I fear? (Are not those Alleluias pathetic? The poor Apostles!

They have to try to feel happy in their Lord's enduring Easter: but their own skies are shrouded.)

The Prayer. Almighty everlasting God, make us ever to bear a will consecrated unto Thee, and with sincere heart to serve Thy Majesty.

St. Peter (I Peter iv) asks Christians to act as he and the Apostles certainly did during that grave Novena: to watch in prayer, "but above all, to preserve unbroken mutual charity among yourselves." And the Alleluia-chant gathers touchingly up our Lord's promise to His family—"I will not leave you orphans: I go, but I will come to you, and your heart shall rejoice, Alleluia." The *Gospel* (John end of xv and xvi) supplements this. Christ will come, and He will send the Holy Ghost: they shall have His witness within them: but all the same, their joy will definitely have to be a spiritual one; for on earth little enough consolation will be theirs.

It is the *Offertory* that best drives that lesson home, stressing the full meaning of our Lord:—

"Father, while I was with them, *I* was keeping them, them that Thou gavest Me. But now I am coming to Thee, nor do I ask that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one."

How grave then is, for all its joyousness, the Ascension. The Missal does not demand of us that we prepare for Pentecost as we do for Easter, and much of

Easter overflows into these nine days as nothing does into Lent. Lent is a very unmitigated experience, nor are we required to repeat it even briefly here—nine days for forty. . . . But at last let us make a great deal of these nine days! The Holy Ghost will Himself direct us how to do so for our best advantage if we ask Him.

The Vigil of Pentecost.

Pentecost, like Easter Sunday, is prepared for by an elaborate ritual, including the Blessing of the Font preceded by prophecies. It is impossible to translate these fully. Enough to indicate their gist.

The first prophecy (Gen. xxii) relates the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham, and the prayer that follows it expresses what the Church wishes to be its lesson:

> O God, who in the deed of Abraham Thy servant didst give to the human race an example of obedience, grant us both to break the perversity of our will, and in all things to fulfil the rightness of Thy precepts.

The second prophecy relates the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites: the prayer is:—

> O God, who by the light of the New Testament hast unlocked the meaning of miracles accomplished long ago, so that the Red Sea is to be seen as a type of our sacred Font, and that Thy People, freed from Egypt, should display the sacrament of the Christian folk, grant, that all peoples may by the merit of faith catch up with Israel's privilege, and be regenerated by participation in Thy Spirit.

The third prophecy (Deut. xxxi) contains the last words of Moses and his declaration that he foresaw the obstinate perversity of the Chosen People, and that the book of the Law was to be preserved as a

witness against them for ever. The first words of his "song" as read in Deuteronomy are then given, the prayer is:—

> O God, the glory of the faithful, and the life of the righteous, who through Moses Thy servant has taught us too, by the music of a sacred hymn, bring to pass for all peoples the effect of Thy mercy, by taking from them fear, and giving to them bliss; so that what was spoken as a threat, may be turned into an eternal remedy.

The fourth prophecy (Isai. iv) relates to the happy consummation of the world, and the triumph of God's Chosen. Such will be, says the prophet, the indisputable superiority of its people, that "seven women" shall be asking each man to be allowed but to bear his name, that legally at least they may have entered into the sacred group. Thereafter the prophecy describes the glories of the Messianic age; the only difficult sentence is that beginning *Si abluerit,* which means, "Assuredly the Lord will wash away the filth, etc." The prayer is:—

> Almighty, everlasting God, who, through Thine only Son, hast shown that Thou art Thy Church's husbandman, in mercy nurturing every vine-shoot that in the same Thy Christ, who is the true Vine, doth bear fruit, so that it bear more fruit—may no thorns of sins prevail against Thy Faithful, whom like a vine Thou hast carried across from Egypt through the fountain of baptism; and thus, preserved by the consecration of Thy Spirit, may they be dowered with everlasting fruit.

The fifth prophecy laments the loss of the true Wisdom even by the Chosen People. (Baruch.) The prayer asks:—

> O God, who hast taught us by the mouths of the prophets to abandon things of time and hasten towards those of eternity, grant to Thy servants, that what we

realise has been commanded by Thee, by heavenly inspiration we may be strengthened to fulfil.

The sixth prophecy is the famous passage from Ezechiel—the Vision of the Valley of Dried Bones. And the prayer asks:—

O Lord God of all power, who restorest what was fallen, and what Thou hast restored dost guard, increase the people that are to be renewed in Thy sanctifying Name; so that all who by holy baptism are cleansed, ever by Thine inspiration may be led.

Before the priest proceeds to the blessing of the Font (as on Holy Saturday) he says:—

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we who venerate the feast of the Giving of the Holy Spirit, may, burning with heavenly desires, thirst for the Font of Life.

VIGIL OF PENTECOST.

Introit (when the Prophecies and the rest have not been used, see p. 15). Ezech. xxxvi. When I shall have been sanctified among you, I will gather you in from every land, and I will pour out upon you a pure water, and you shall be cleansed from all your defilements, and I will give you a new spirit, Alleluia.

Prayer. Grant, we pray, almighty God, that the splendour of Thy radiance may shine forth over us; and may the Light that is Thine establish by the illuminating of the Holy Spirit the hearts of those who by Thy grace are re-born.

The *Epistle* is from Acts xix, concerning those Ephesians who "had not so much as heard whether there were a Holy Spirit." After the brief *Gradual,* the *Tract* consists of the little psalm we usually sing at Benediction. Recall always that it is a challenge to the *heathen* to "praise the *Lord, Him* praise ye, O all nations." The reason is, that "upon *us* is established His mercy, and the Lord's loyalty endureth for ever-

more." The outpouring of the Spirit is meant for all the world: in inviting that world to yield to Him, we are but co-operating with our God.

The *Gospel* is from the incomparable discourse of our Lord in the Supper-Room, related in St. John (xiv). It contains the promise of our Comforter, and of our *non*-orphanhood, and of our union through Christ with all the Holy Trinity.

The *Silent Prayer* asks for the purifying light of the Holy Spirit, and again, the *Post-Communion* asks that His in-pouring may cleanse us, and, by the deep-stealing dew of His spray, make us grow fertile. Notice how often, and as we know, how rightly, Light is regarded in the Missal as purifying. The germs of sin cannot withstand those rays. And in the Scriptures the transition from light to water and back again is always easy. After all, we too, talk of a "flood" of light, or of light "streaming" in. The *Communion* (John vii) quotes our Lord: "If a man believes in Me, forth from him shall flow Living Waters"; He said this, adds the evangelist, about the Spirit which they who believed in Him were destined to receive.

In this way we are led up to the Feast which yields to none throughout the year in dignity and worshipfulness.

PENTECOST.

Introit. Wisd. i. The Spirit of the Lord fills the whole earth, alleluia, yea, this whole universe doth understand His voice. Ps. lxvii. Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Him flee before His face.

Prayer. God, who on this day didst teach the hearts of the Faithful by the enlightening of the Holy Spirit,

grant us to be ever, in the selfsame Spirit, truly wise, and ever to rejoice in His consolation.

The *Epistle* from Acts ii, relates the first Whitsunday.

"Alleluia, alleluia," cries the *Gradual,* "Send forth Thy Spirit, and life shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. (Genuflect.) Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy Faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy love."

It is impossible to translate into appropriate verse the Sequence that follows. Many have tried; all have failed. Any adaptation for the sake of metre or of rhyme, loses something of the original, and not one notion can be spared. Best, then, to say, quite simply and without decoration, what the Sequence prays for, and from Whom.

Come, Holy Spirit, and from heaven send forth Thy radiant light. Come, Father of the poor, Giver of gifts, light of the heart. Best of Consolers, dear Guest of the soul, dearest Refreshment. In toil, repose; cool in scorching heat; comfort in tears. O blissful Light, fill the heart's innermost of Thine own Faithful. Without Thy power, naught is in man, naught save what harms. Cleanse the defiled; water the parched soul; heal what is wounded. Bend what is rigid; chafe what is frozen; straighten the awry. Grant to Thy faithful who in Thee do trust, Thy sevenfold gift—grant the reward of virtue; grant, at death, salvation; grant eternal joy. Amen. Alleluia.

The *Gospel,* still from the treasure-house of St. John (xiv), dwells once more on the presence and love of God in and for the faithful soul, and the gift thereto of the Holy Spirit and of peace.

Offertory. Ps. lxvii. Make permanent this thing, O God, that Thou hast worked within us: in Thy Temple that is in Jerusalem, kings shall give Thee gifts.

The next two prayers have been used already on the Eve, and the *Communion* is simply from the Acts.

There can be no doubt at all but that it is the "mind" of our Lord, or the Church, and of the liturgy, that we should with all the ardour of our innermost soul desire and invoke and live by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is all that is opposite to the exterior, the mechanical and the inhuman—to dead formula, to crusted convention and to coercion. It is the mind beneath the thought itself; the will within the very instinct. And in the case of the Holy Spirit, it is what is most opposite of all to the idolatry of the flesh and of the world. It shows what else were hidden behind the scenery of our stage; it makes audible the divine whisper beneath all the noises. It urges, and it eases; it warms, and it cools; it strips, it enriches; it is Source, it is Current and it carries us to that Sea of peace into which, better than ripple that merges itself into ocean, we are to make our home with that Trinity from Whom we came. In your personal life, see that where you cannot *think* of what you ought to do, the holy Spirit is the Master of all first thoughts: underneath all arguments, He will be speaking. And when you do not feel that you can do what now you see you should, He is the Force behind all impulses, and can make you do, if you but ask Him, what alone you never could. And if you are of an apostolic mind, when you look round upon your world or even land or even town, you cannot but see that there is no *mere* organisation, nor ever will be, capable of so much as carrying an outside knowledge of our Faith to so many as a tenth of the souls existing there. And what is the mere informing people of what is true? Hearts can be shut to truth; why, even minds can be, at the

moment, incapable of so much as understanding what you mean. Alone the interior working of the Spirit, independently in the minds of others, and mediately through your words and life, can alter those hearts that you know you cannot touch. Each of us needs his recurrent Pentecost; our country and our age assuredly need theirs. Offer the vast fountain of prayer that has been rising for the last nine days, that the Holy Spirit may be re-given to the world. Offer these to God, and if you added no drop to that ascending jet of prayer, regret that, resolve next year to co-operate, and, for the present, do as you have the right to do—make *yours* the prayer and penance of your fellow-Christians, with whom, in Christ, you are incorporate, and offer the whole to God.

MONDAY IN WHIT-WEEK.

Introit. Ps. lxxx. He gave them rich grain of corn for food, and from the rock, He gave them abundant honey. Exult to God our helper; sing triumph to the God of Jacob.

Prayer. O God who to Thine Apostles didst give the Holy Spirit, grant to Thy folk the effect of their loving prayer; and lavish peace on those to whom Thou hast given faith.

The *Epistle* is again from the Acts (x), and the *Gospel* (John iii) is our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus. The rest of the Mass has no outstanding elements.

TUESDAY IN WHIT-WEEK.

This Mass is entirely made up of familiar phrases, save the *Post-Communion* with its bold realism. "May the Holy Spirit, Lord, refresh our minds by these divine Sacraments, for Himself He is the remission of

all sins." The Holy Spirit, indwelling us, *is* love and divine and supernatural charity. When we accept this, so far as in us lies, we quite simply are in possession of the fact that destroys an evil will—makes away with sin.

WEDNESDAY IN WHIT-WEEK (EMBER DAY).

Introit. Ps. lxvii. God, when Thou wast going forth before Thy people, making a path for them, dwelling amidst them, then the earth did shake, and the heavens distill their showers. Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered; let them that Hate Him flee before His face.

In Easter-tide, the passage of the Red Sea often stood for our Lord's victorious road across His Passion: here the journey of the Israelites is the type for the victorious advance of the Church, though she too will have again and again her Red Sea and the best crown is the martyr's.

The first *Prayer* is: We pray Thee, Lord, may the Paraclete who proceeds from Thee illuminate our minds, and guide us, as Thy Son promised, into all truth.—And the second: Grant, we pray, almighty and merciful God, that the Holy Spirit, on His Coming, may so deign to inhabit us as to make us altogether the temple of His Glory.

There is nothing in the rest of the Mass to delay us, unless indeed we linger over that part of the Gospel (John vi) which speaks of the Father *drawing* the soul to Christ, its source of life. Marvel at this initiative of God.

THURSDAY IN WHIT-WEEK.

Save for *Epistle* and *Gospel,* this Mass is identical with that for Whit-Sunday.

Friday in Whit-Week (Ember Day).

The Prayer. Grant to Thy Church, we pray, O merciful Lord, that, gathered together as she is by the Holy Spirit, she may in no way be disturbed by any hostile onslaught.

Appropriate to this is the *Epistle* from Joel ii; it will always help if we remember that the symbol for the Spirit very soon came to be, in the Church, water (rain, river, or source) far more than, say, the wind you might have expected. And one result of this divine rain is the sending up of no less divine a crop, and in particular, that Eucharist over whose elements the Holy Spirit was always, from earliest days, called down (p. 25). The *Gospel,* however, relates the forgiveness of sins by Christ (Luke v) and sends our mind forward to that "breathing" of our Lord on His Apostles which gave them the Holy Spirit and therewith the power of forgiving sins. In Baptism, Penance, the Eucharist, and of course in Confirmation and Ordination, how intimately is the Spirit of God involved!

The Silent Prayer contains a new image.

May this sacrifice, O Lord, offered thus to Thine eyes, be consumed by that divine fire which, through Thy Holy Spirit, enkindled the hearts of the disciples of Christ Thy Son.

Saturday in Whit-Week (Ember Day).

Introit. Rom. v. The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, through His Spirit who dwells in us.

Ps. cii. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.

Of that which is within my soul, somewhat is the Holy Spirit. Hence it is that St. Paul says that even though how to pray, or what, we know not, the Spirit

joins hands with our weakness, and intercedes for us with groanings beyond the need of words: and God, who scrutinises hearts, knows what is the meaning of the Spirit. Romans, viii, 26. If but we would turn over our prayer to the Holy Spirit, and ceaselessly ask Him to say within us what we ought to say, and how, incredible would be forthwith the power of *our* intercession!

As usual there are several readings, separated by *Prayer*. Of these the first is:

> In mercy pour, O Lord, the Holy Spirit into our mind for by His wisdom were we made, and by His providence are ruled.

The first reading is from Joel (ii), the passage quoted by St. Peter in his first sermon (Acts ii); it is followed by the *Prayer:*

> "With that fire, we pray, O Lord, may the Holy Spirit inflame us, that our Lord Jesus Christ sent upon the earth and so vehemently willed to see enkindled."

The second reading (Lev. xxiii) tells of the institution of the Hebrew feast of Pentecost—seven full weeks from the morrow of the sabbath after the entry into the Promised Land. The *Prayer* merely asks that the Ember fast (so unexpectedly introduced into this festival-week—yet what more appropriate time than this for ordinations?) may avail us both in body and in mind. The next reading is from Deuteronomy xxvi, and concerns the first offering made before the priest after that same entry. The next *Prayer* again asks that our fast may be from sins, as from food, and the more easily thus obtain God's favour. The next reading, Lev. xxvi, contains God's promises for the prosperity of the Chosen People in their new land, if they

be faithful to Him, and again the *Prayer* asks that our abstinence be not only from food but from wrong-doing. Finally, the reading (Dan. iii) relates the story of the three young Israelites in the Babylonian furnace, and is followed by a brief song of praise, and the familiar *Prayer* that even as they were uninjured by that fire, so we too may be unscorched by the flame of vice.

St. Paul's words, which form the *Introit*, form also the end of the *Epistle*, and the *Gospel* (Luke iv) relates the casting out of *evil* spirits by Our Lord.

Perhaps it is not rash to see in the *Communion*—"The wind blows where it listeth, and you hear its sound, but know not whence it cometh nor whither it goeth (John iii)"—a reminder that after all, if we possess the Holy Spirit, we must expect and wish Him to take the initiative, as we have often said: we cannot thereafter dictate our own fate: we have made ourselves over to a Life greater than ours, a thought and a will that are infinite and all-wise and all-powerful. Far better then will it be for us to ask to know no more, but to trust ourselves entirely to that mighty operation.

Trinity Sunday.

This is a strange feast—it is a true feast, yet if it is one at all, you would expect its rank to be higher than any. It is not quite clear how there *can* be a "feast" of the Trinity, and much discussion took place before it was permitted. In a sense, every Sunday commemorates the Trinity. However, the feast can be regarded by us, if we like, more as a solemn commemoration of the dogma than directly of the Three Persons that are in God: and in that case it will be of high utility

for us; for we have no right to forget any of our dogmas, certainly not on the grounds that they are "too high" for us. It coincides with the First Sunday after Pentecost, and gives a kind of covering blessing to the series of Sundays that shall follow.

Introit. Blessed be the Holy Trinity and Undivided Unity! we will give thanks thereto, for Its mercy hath been shown towards us. Ps. viii. O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is Thy Name in all the earth!

The *Prayers* are: Almighty everlasting God, who hast granted to Thy servants to acknowledge, in the profession of the true Faith, the glory of the eternal Trinity, and, in the power of that Majesty, to adore the Unity, grant, that by firmness in that faith, we may ever be armed against all adversities. Sanctify, we pray Thee, O Lord our God, the victim that we offer, through the invocation of Thy holy Name, and by means of it make Thou us into a perfect and eternal gift for Thee. May our receiving of this Sacrament, O Lord our God, avail us for the well-being both of body and of soul, and our acknowledging of the eternal holy Trinity and undivided Unity.

The *Epistle* (Rom. xi) exclaims:

O the height of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how beyond our understanding are His verdicts, how undecipherable His ways! Who can claim knowledge of the mind of the Lord? Who hath ever been His counsellor? Who hath first given to Him, that He should then pay back? Nay! From Him and by means of Him, and in Him exist all things. To Him the glory for evermore, Amen.

The *Gospel* (Mt. xxviii) contains the injunction to baptise with the Trinitarian formula.

The remainder of this Mass consists of magnificent cries of homage.

Gradual. Dan. iii. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who dost gaze down upon the depths, whose throne is above

the Cherubim. Blessed art Thou, O Lord in highest heaven, and for ever to be praised. Blessed art Thou, God of our ancestors, and for ever to be praised.

It is perhaps a good foundation for all our further devotion, to recognise firmly the complete transcendence of our God. Once this foundation of complete humility is substantially built, then we can safely continue with our loving familiarities. Indeed, swift after this ineffable vision of God as in His nature we know, by revelation, that He is, comes a constellation of feasts dear for their human intimacy and pathos. Pre-eminent are those of Corpus Christi—the *Body* of the Lord—and of the Sacred Heart. We would not be safe in reposing among the dear humanities of our Faith, were there not at the back of our minds the great awe that the thought of God must generate.

Corpus Christi.

It is remarkable that the *Introit* is the same as one of the Pentecostal introits. The most concrete thing and the least visible and tangible thing—a Sacrament, and the Spirit,—are so intimately united in their work and its motive that spontaneously the same words arise to the Church's lips in regard of each. Is not this an unconscious fulfilment of our Lord's words, that the Coming of the Spirit would not mean the absence of Himself? Each is a *Real* Presence.

Ps. lxxx. He fed them with rich grain of wheat, and from the rock, of honey gave He abundance unto them. Rejoice in God our Helper; sing triumph to the God of Israel.

The first *Prayer* is well-known from its use at Benediction:

"O God, who in a wonderful sacrament hast bequeathed to us the memorial of Thy Passion, grant we pray that we may so venerate the sacred mysteries of Thy Body and Blood as continuously to experience within us the fruit of Thy Redemption."

The Silent Prayer. Graciously grant to Thy Church, we pray Thee, Lord, the gifts of Unity and Peace, that beneath the gifts we offer Thee are mystically indicated.

Post-Communion. Make us, we pray Thee, Lord, to be fulfilled with the enjoyment of Thy divinity in eternity, which the sharing in Thy Body and precious Blood prefigures here in time.

The *Epistle* is the account of the Institution of the Eucharist from I Cor. xi; the *Gospel* is part of the great Eucharistic discourse in John vi. The rest of the Mass needs no explanation; and the translations of St. Thomas Aquinas's magnificent Sequence are tolerably adequate, since so much is close-packed dogma, ingenious mosaic rather than a poetic flow. But from *Ecce Panis* to the end, St. Thomas is inspired and as lofty and yet tender as in, for example, perhaps his supremely perfect work, *Verbum Supernum Prodiens,* or the last two stanzas of *Sacris Solemniis.*

The Feast of the Sacred Heart is to be kept on the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi. Let us recall that in this devotion we do not detach our Lord's Heart from the rest of His person and offer it a separate worship. Our worship goes simply to Christ, who loves us, suffers with us, and for us. Yet His heart is not a *mere* metaphor. There is more than metaphor when we speak of a loving heart, an aching, broken, joyous heart. Whatever we do mean by that, is included in our devotion to the Heart of Jesus Christ.

The Mass for the Feast of the Sacred Heart has quite recently been changed (1928).

Introit. Ps. xxxii, 11, 19 and 1. The thoughts of His Heart are for ever and ever, that He may snatch their souls from death, and nourish them when they are an-hungered. Exult, ye righteous, in the Lord; praise befits the right.

Gradual. Ps. xxiv, 8, 9. Loving is the Lord and right; therefore a Law shall He give to them that wander in their way. He shall direct the gentle in justice, and teach the meek His paths. Mt. xi, 29. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls.

Offertory. Ps. lxviii, 21. My heart foresaw but misery and disgrace; I waited to find one who would grieve along with Me, and there was none: to find one that should console Me, and I found not one.

The *Communion.* Jn. xix, 34. One of the soldiers opened His side with a lance, and forthwith there came out blood and water.

The *Prayers.* God, who dost deign mercifully to lavish upon us infinite treasures of love in the Heart of Thy Son, that was wounded by our sins, grant, we pray, that by showing towards It the humble service of our affection, we may also fulfil our duty of a worthy satisfaction. O Lord, we pray Thee, look towards the unspeakable love of the Heart of Thy dear Son, that what we offer Thee may be both a gift acceptable to Thee, and the expiation of our Sins. May Thy holy things, Lord Jesus, impart to us fervour from God, so that having experienced the sweetness of Thy most dear Heart, we may learn to despise the things of earth and love the things of heaven.

The *Gospel* relates the opening of Christ's side upon the Cross, and this memory is echoed in the *Preface:*

> Truly right is it . . . that we should ever thank Thee, Eternal God, who didst will that Thy Sole-Begotten should be pierced, while hanging on the Cross, by the soldier's spear, so that His opened Heart, shrine of God's lavished richness, should pour forth for us streams of mercy and of grace, and so that what never ceased to

burn with love for us, should lie open both as a rest for souls, and a refuge of salvation for the penitent.

But I cannot deny that I find the supremely beautiful and noble part of this new Mass to consist in the *Epistle* (Ephesians, iii, 8-19):

> Brethren, to me, least of all the saints, this grace was granted—to proclaim among the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to pour light upon the dispensation of the Mystery that lay hidden away from the eyes of ages past, in the heart of God who created all things, so that *now* should be made known, to princes and to powers, in a heaven-world, by means of the Church, the multitudinous wisdom of God—according to the eternal purpose that He achieved in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord, in whom (at last) we can speak free and plain and have confident access to God because of our faith in Him. And, therefore, I bend my knees to the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ—from Whom all fatherhood in heaven or in earth wins its name—that He may grant you according to the measure of the richness of His glory to be powerfully strengthened by His Spirit in your inner self, so as to make Christ dwell by means of faith in your hearts; that in love you be rooted and founded, and that you may be strong to comprehend, along with all the saints, what is the width and the length and the depth and the height—yes, to know the love of Christ that outpasseth any knowledge—and be fulfilled till you reach the full plenitude of God.

Hence in this Mass are expressed all the sentiments with which the love of our Father and of Jesus Christ should rouse within us. From the very beginning—in His Eternity—God intended our grace-union with Himself, through His own Son made man. Alas, we sinned; but not for that was the divine Love extinguished in our regard. The Incarnation indeed took place, though the human history of Christ was altered

assuredly. The Cross: the piercing of that Heart. An unrequited love; a suffering love. Love gentle and most tender; but now, too, so sorrowful. Well, in such a Heart, not only the faithful and the loving find their rest, but the sinner, if he but repent, his refuge and salvation. And from repentance, how should Love exclude us? It pleads with us and softly yet so strongly leads us towards it: and once we have "understood," we shall find that neither this way nor that is there any limit to God's love—impossible for our imagination to reach out to its immensity. At least, if we but trust its working, we shall ourselves become so alive, so loving, as to grow into the full stature of those sons of God that we are called—as St. John insists—and actually are.

It is very clear then, that the Missal having deliberately allowed Corpus Christi to take its place almost immediately after Trinity Sunday, wishes us indeed to maintain that austere foundation for our devotion which consists in a most profound awe, and spirit of reverence, and indeed overwhelmed recognition that our Faith is founded upon mystery; but also that we should remember that henceforward *all* our "free access to the Throne of Grace," all our "freedom of speech," has come about through Jesus Christ, our fellowman and brother, and not only so, but through him *sacramentato,* as Italian is happy enough to be able to put

NOTE—There are a great number of quite modern Masses in honour of events or objects connected with the Passion, but the only two of these that are in the body of the Missal are those of the Discovery and of the Exaltation of the Cross (May 3; Sept. 14). These have their magnificence owing to certain texts like that from Gal. vi: "Our duty is to glory in the Cross" or that from Philippians ii: "Obedient unto death, and that, a death upon a cross" and a few references to the great Passion hymns. But these other Masses explain themselves, and most of them are rarely if ever said since the reform of the Breviary.

it. And yet nearer our time, the Church has re-sanctioned this, by admitting the Feast of the Sacred Heart to the place that was asked for it; so that we, having passed out of the period of ancient and tremendous feasts—Epiphany, Easter, Pentecost—and having duly bowed our heads before the "inaccessible Light" of the Trinity itself, are at once invited to proceed to the rest of the year in the company of our Human Lord, and our Lord twice hidden in His Eucharistic veils.

First Sunday after Pentecost.

With the Sundays after Pentecost, we pass into the normal and substantial part of the Church's year. They last till Advent has returned. I do not think that we ought to try to treat them as though they were one idea running throughout each, let alone all. Still less ought we to treat them as if they contained a sort of *crescendo,* were working themselves up towards something, as Advent does to Christmas or Lent to Easter. It is best to take each Mass, and make the most of it separately. Indeed, it is best to look for one item—be it prayer or even one sentence of a prayer—in each Mass, and use it as colouring-matter, so to say, for all the rest—as putting a meaning into verses or words that else might not move us. The wonderful thing about the Liturgy is that it keeps changing, as a sea does when it throws up a ripple on which the sunlight flashes. The Introit will appeal to you, one year, while the Gradual or the Epistle may be what rivets your thought the next year. It is best simply to ask our Lord to teach you through the Mass, and then to let Him do it. But recall always that it *is* Mass. It is not spiritual reading. You must bring every thought,

every desire, into subordination to the central fact of *Offering*. Every Mass is Sacrifice.

Introit. Ps. xii. Lord, in Thy mercy do I hope: in Thy salvation doth my heart exult: to the Lord will I sing who hath given good things to me. How long, O Lord wilt Thou utterly forget me? how long wilt Thou turn Thy face from me?—(And the *Glory be,* and the repeated antiphon seem to make answer: "Not even for an hour!")

Prayer. O God, the strength of them that hope in Thee, be attentive in mercy to our cries; and since apart from Thee man's weakness can do nothing, grant the assistance of Thy grace, that in the following out of Thy commandments we may please Thee both in intention and in fact.

The *Post-Communion:*

Filled by such mighty gifts, we pray Thee, grant that not only we find room for these gifts of salvation, but may never cease from praising Thee.

The *Epistle* may be almost the most exquisite page in any apostolic writing (I John iv). The aged St. John utters first the all-inclusive dogma, that God *is Love*. He therefore loved us *first,* and therefore sent His Son into our world, that we might find in Him our life. When our union with Jesus, and thereby with our eternal God, is achieved, nothing more needs to be done. And that we might indeed will to co-operate in that unification, God Himself, God's Holy Spirit, has been given to us, and through Him we call, and appropriate, Christ as Saviour. Hence, deduces the Apostle, first, there can be no more *fear* in our lives (that panic craven hopeless fear that makes havoc in the soul: of *awe* there will be plenty), but we shall draw the very obvious and practical conclusion, that

we must love our fellow men, equally with our selves the objects of *God's* love. The *Gospel* in many forms reiterates the doctrine of charity.

The variable parts of this Mass carry us through a soul's whole spiritual history. The *Gradual* begins by confession of sin, and cry for mercy. God answers that the first prerequisite is to *be* merciful. The soul continues here and in the *Offertory* to insist that it will pray, with the certainty that God will hear. And in the *Communion,* gratitude for marvellous response, and sheer un-self-regarding praise, make a heavenly climax. This basic and most Christian Mass can be enduringly dear to us.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Introit. Ps. xvii. The Lord has become my Protector: He has led me out into a wide space: He has saved me, because He willed to have me. O I will love Thee, O Lord, my Strength! The Lord is my firm foundation, my Refuge, my Rescue!

Prayer. Make us constantly to have, O Lord, alike awe and love towards Thy holy Name; for never dost Thou deprive of Thy guidance those whom Thou dost establish and ground firm upon Thy love.

The *Silent Prayer.* May the Gift to be dedicated to Thy Name, O Lord, purify us, and day by day transfer our life-springs into a heavenly world.

Post-Communion. We have received the gifts of heaven: we pray Thee, Lord, that along with our frequenting of that Mystery, its saving consequences may increase.

While the *Communion* is again all gratitude, there is a certain anxiety once more audible in the *Gradual* and the *Offertory.* The *Epistle* and *Gospel* perhaps explain this. St. John (I John iii) renews his coupling of our appropriation of the divine life which saves us, with

that love for our fellow-men in which we feel ourselves so deficient. We are still so uncharitable in a thousand ways, that we almost fear lest after all our hope that we love God may be illusory. And the *Gospel* shows how many, who did know of the divine invitation, did not profit by it, and that it was those who seemed to have fewest advantages who actually profited by the Feast. Well, the *Prayer,* grave yet tender, gives us the right perspective. An awe-struck love: a most modest familiarity: the feast of the Trinity unforgotten in the human intimacies of Corpus Christi and the Sacred Heart; and those gentler lovelinesses foreseen amidst the dazzlements of the Trinity itself. Thus is constructed a very solid love: *God's* love is firmer than any rock: therein we can participate; and forthwith through all life's hazards God directs us. A grave, uncompromising, yet how loveable a Mass.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Introit. Ps. xxiv. Look upon me and have pity on me, O Lord, for I am all alone, and poor: look on my lowliness and my anxiety, and dismiss all my sins. To Thee, Lord, lift I up my soul: my God, in Thee I trust: let me not be put to shame.

Prayer. O God, the protector of those that hope in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing holy, multiply upon us Thy mercy, that with Thee for Governor, Thee for Guide, we may so pass through the good things of time, as not to lose those that are eternal.

The *Epistle* (I Peter v) tells us to bow our heads beneath the mighty hand of God, that in the day of His coming He may lift us up—"cast all your care on Him, for Himself He cares for you." Then the Advent warning is repeated, that we must be sober and alert and resist the Tempter.

"Knowing that all your brotherhood is involved in the same painful experience which is everywhere in this world. But the God of all grace, who has called us to His eternal glory through Jesus Christ, will, when you have suffered a little, Himself complete you, confirm you, and consolidate you. To Him the glory and the rule for ever."

These quite magnificent words at once pick up and develop that notion of solidity which the previous Mass supplied to us, and make how grand a background to the tiny human touches with which our Lord likes to work out the doctrine of God's "care" for each little sinful but penitent soul—the precariousness of human virtue, the stress and strain of anxious human life, and the persevering, serene, unfaltering love of God that toils in Jesus Christ "until He find" us.—All the rest of the Mass echoes these thoughts:

Gradual. Ps. liv. "Cast Thy care upon the Lord: Himself shall feed thee . . . God is a Judge who is just, strong and patient: He will not be angry every day for ever.

Offertory. Ps. ix. Every one who knows Thy name, O Lord, must hope in Thee! for never Thou failest one who seeketh Thee—never hath He forgotten the prayer of the poor.

Communion. Luke xv. I tell you, there is joy for the Angels of God over one sinner who does penance.

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

Introit. Ps. xxvi. The Lord is my enlightening and my salvation—whom shall I fear? the Lord is the Defender of my life—of whom shall I be afraid? The enemies that afflicted me, have themselves grown weak and are fallen.—Though battles be arrayed against me, my heart shall not quail!

Prayer. Grant us, we pray Thee, Lord, that we may find the world's course peaceably governed by Thyself,

and that Thy Church may be glad and worship Thee in quietness.

The *Silent Prayer* contains a famous sentence from St. Augustine:

"In mercy, when our wills rebel, Lord, our wills to Thee compel."

The *Gradual,* as so often, is mainly occupied with the cry of the "poor" and helpless to his God; the *Offertory* (Ps. xii) contains that heart-cry of the Psalmist:

"Give light to my eyes, lest ever I go to sleep in death —lest ever the enemy say: 'I have prevailed against him.'"

The note of the Mass is most definitely encouragement, and in both *Epistle* (Rom. viii) and *Gospel* (Luke v) it is not only struck once more but transposed, so to say, into a nobler key. St. Paul admits the suffering, but regards it as not worthy to be compared with the glory destined to be revealed in us. Suddenly expanding his vision, he sees all creation as straining its eyes towards the revelation of God's sons —towards the New Creation manifested. He sees the world as enslaved—not as though she deliberately chose and preferred that enslavement; but, in regard of that great Hope that is hers, he feels even "nature" —even the *good* things of time, to be a relative slavery, and indeed, as containing germs of sheer corruption. They do not last: they fall to pieces. Therefore in all its parts Nature groans in its travail until to-day. And even we, who *possess* the *first* fruits of the Spirit, we too are aching till the full result of our adoption shall be manifest. But when it *is* revealed, what will our toil have mattered, or seem like, then? "All the

night long we have toiled and taken nothing," said St. Peter. None the less, Christ had bidden him first "row out a little," and then, more largely, "Strike out into the deep!" Whatever be your past, be sure of the future, and as Christ asks more and then more of you, obey, and you will not be "able to draw in, for the multitude that you have taken."

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The *Introit* is a familiar cry for help: but the *Prayer* would suffice to make this Mass for ever valuable.

> "God, who for them that love Thee hast prepared good things invisible, pour into our hearts the instinct of love for Thee, that, loving Thee in all things and above all things, we may obtain Thy promises, that exceed all we can desire."

The Missal keeps reminding us that the centre of gravity for our love, as for our intelligence, is in an invisible world, and that it is quite impossible for us human creatures not to shift it back into this tangible and material department of the world, save by the grace and help of God. "Blessed be the Lord," cries the *Offertory* (Ps. xv) who hath given me understanding: I will always keep God well before my eyes; and He is at my right, lest I be dislodged." The words of the *Gospel* (Mt. v) often puzzle readers. Impossible to discuss the passage in detail. The entire section, of which this is a paragraph, insists that true morality is not external only, but interior. Evil desires are sin; not only actual adultery; prayer from the heart is necessary, not only advertised devotion. Here (I am inclined to think) there is a contrast between two sets of instances of anger and contempt: not only you must not murder, but you must conquer the interior *mood*

of *anger:* if you use a technically insulting word, you are liable to be had up before the Sanhedrin: but if you despise your brother in your heart, and yield to real scorn, you are in danger of God's condemnation.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Introit. Ps. xxvii. The Lord is the strength of His People, and a defence and a salvation for His Anointed. O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance, and govern them for ever. To Thee, Lord, I cry: my God, be not silent towards me; for if Thou speakest not to me, I shall be like them that are engulfed in the abyss.

(Remember always that the Antiphon is repeated, and explains and when necessary supplements and balances the thought of the verse that survives from the psalm.)

Prayer. O God of power, from whom all that is best doth come, plant in our hearts a love for Thy Name, and give us increase of reverence towards Thee; that what is good, Thou mayest foster, and, through our earnest devotion, what Thou hast fostered, that Thou mayest preserve.

The Silent Prayer. (Receive, O Lord, our gifts) and that the prayer of none be wasted, no man's petition void, make us in truth to obtain what so persistently we ask.

St. Paul in the *Epistle* (Rom. vi) is working out his favourite theme of the parallelism—or better, organic union—between Christ's life and ours. He died, and rose, and lives. So too, for us. Baptism was an act of dying to our old and merely "natural" life: we emerge from beneath the baptismal waters into a new life. (For a moment Paul passes aside to the metaphor of the grain that dies and lives again. But he returns simply to the thought of death and life.) Inasmuch

as sin is death, and sin was involved in the life out of which we have been baptised—original sin, and, in the adult at least, personal sins—let it be once and for all that we have died to such things even as once and for all we have been admitted into the Christian world, the Christian life. The *Gospel* (Mark viii) by its story of the multiplication of the loaves, sufficiently reminds us whence we can get the "daily bread" which shall *keep* us in life, now that we live. "Make *perfect* my steps in Thy paths," sings the *Offertory,* "lest my footsteps slide—make marvellous Thy mercies upon me!"

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost.

The *Introit* and the Alleluia-chant after the *Gradual* cry to the heathen to give God praise: but this notion is not carried on through the rest of the Mass. The *Prayer* is:

> O God, whose Providence is never deceived in its government, we humbly pray Thee to remove from us anything that might hurt us, and grant us everything that can help us.

That is a straightforward petition, if you will! and how thoroughly in the spirit of this Missal!

In the *Epistle* (Rom. vi) the first words really belong to what had gone before. Paul has just said: You once were slaves to Sin: emancipated from Sin, you have entered the service of Righteousness. He then practically says: "I am speaking in this human way—personifying Sin and Righteousness—because of the weakness of your flesh—because your human imagination needs something of the sort." He then goes on: "As then you once gave over your bodies to the service of Sin, *now* you must do so to that of Righteousness. So long as you were servants of Sin, Righteousness had

no authority over you. Now she has. But it is not a mere exchange of authorities. *Sin's* wages are one thing—those of Righteousness quite another! Sin pays the wage of death—God pays the wage—No! God gives the *free gift* of holiness and thus of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ." Certainly, Sin is a cheating master: in obedience to Sin, a man commits sins, and gets nothing for it save illusion and then disillusionment and then eternal death. Serve Righteousness, do her works, and you obtain . . . no! be yet more accurate. Serve *God,* and you will get what far transcends anything you could earn—any mere wages proportionate to your service: you are given that Eternal Life, through Christ, which is the freest of free gifts. The *Gospel* (Mt. vii) insists that good works *must* be done: it is not enough to profess God's Lordship with the lips, but one's life must do so. Forthwith the *Offertory* prays that our offering may be acceptable as might be whole-burnt-offerings of rams and bulls—as thousands of fat lambs; and the *Silent Prayer* lays hold of this and lifts it into the Christian air by saying:

> "God, who didst gather up the multiplicity of the sacrifices of the Law into the perfection of a single sacrifice, receive this sacrifice from Thy devoted servants, and bless it no less than Thou didst that of Abel, so that what each has offered to the honour of Thy Majesty, may avail unto the salvation of all."

This petition occurs more than once in the Missal. The innumerable sacrifices of the Old Law gained their harmony and cogency as *within* the distant one sacrifice and our many gifts, gathered up into that same offering of Christ, fall back upon the Church at large in a healing spray. And this notion of the *medicinal*

work of the Sacraments begins to show itself frequently now in the liturgy. The *Post-Communion* asks:

> "May Thy curative working, Lord, mercifully extricate us from our perversities, and lead us into what is straight."

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

> *Introit.* Ps. xlvii. We have received, O God, Thy mercy in the midst of Thy temple: according to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise throughout the earth; Thy right hand is filled with justice. Great is the Lord, and loudly to be praised, in the City of our God, in His holy hill.
>
> *Prayer.* Lavish upon us, O Lord, the spirit of ever thinking what is right, and, in Thy mercy, of acting rightly too; that we, who cannot exist without Thee, may be empowered to live according to Thee.

This total dependence on God is hinted also in the *Silent Prayer.*

> "Receive, O Lord, the gifts which we *from Thine own largesse* do offer Thee, so that these thrice-sacred mysteries may, by the working of the power of Thy grace, both sanctify us in our behaviour during this our life, and lead us through unto eternal joys."

The *Post-Communion* asks as so often that the heavenly mysteries and our exterior worship may produce substantial renewal in us, both as to body and to soul.

The *Gradual* is an expression of man's trust in God's greatness; the *Offertory* emphasises God's salvation as given to the lowly and refused to the proud; the *Communion* calls on man to experience God's sweetness and the blessings of him who hopes in God.

There is then struck, in this Mass, the note of our

total dependence upon God, yet not as upon a harsh tyrant, but as upon one who is merciful, helpful, and dear. This surely accounts for the doctrine both of *Epistle* and of *Gospel*. St. Paul (Rom. viii) quite definitely insists that we *are* debtors, but that to the flesh (that is, to the world and all created things *exclusively,* not taking God into account, who made, preserves, and has His plans concerning them) we owe nothing at all: in fact, that self-sufficiency of Creation must be slain out of our beliefs and life. Yet, how great the reward! Our debt to God is not as of slave to master, but as of son, and heir, to father. The *Gospel* (Luke xvi) relates the trickery of a peculating servant who foresees dismissal. By further tricks he seeks to secure a shelter—too weak physically to work, he is too ashamed—not of his crimes, but to beg. His master catches him, and sardonically praises him at least for his craft. Our Lord uses mysterious words indeed when he adds that He too bids us "make friends out of the wicked world, that when we fail, it may receive us into enduring habitations." I regret that the next few verses from St. Luke are not quoted; they end emphatically: "You cannot serve both God and mammon" (that is, the world as opposed to God). While myself I think that the previous words are ironical, it is certain that our Lord teaches that we cannot make a compromise between the services of God, and of World. The only use we can rightly make of the latter is a subordinated use. We cannot physically renounce everything: nor indeed are created things bad in themselves. But the moment we give them first place, even alternately, so to speak, with God, they become bad for us and a source of sin.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The *Introit* is a customary cry for help. It may be of use to recall that the word "truth" (in Thy truth scatter them) means *fidelity*—being "true" to a person or an oath. "Veritas Domini manet in aeternum"—the Loyalty of God (to His covenant) lasts for ever!

> *Prayer.* May the ears of Thy mercy, Lord, be open to the prayers of Thy suppliants, and, that Thou mayest grant what they desire to them that ask Thee, make them to pray for what doth please Thee.

Here is a whole theory of prayer. God has His plan for us: He wants it to be carried out, yet does not want to omit our co-operation. He wants our wills to become His will. He wants us, therefore, to ask for what He wants to give. It is, then, a good prayer to ask to be shown, first, what to pray for, and then how to pray for it. The *Silent Prayer* asks that we may worthily *busy* ourselves with these mysteries—nay, haunt the Eucharistic table, for "whensoever the Commemoration of this Victim is performed, the work of our Redemption is set going." Mass is the sacrifice of Calvary *applied*. The *Post-Communion* asks, through our own Communion, for purity and unity.

By now the general meaning of the variable parts of these Masses is sufficiently clear. Indeed, as a rule their cries and exclamations are themselves fairly general. They are like basic chords or harmonies underlying the melody of the Mass. In the *Offertory* the words mean: "The judgments of the Lord are righteous—His verdicts are more sweet than honey or than honeycomb." In this Mass, the lesson of *Epistle* and *Gospel* (I Cor. x, and Luke xix) stands out with

very clear contours. However privileged you be by your circumstances, there is no mechanical certainty about your perseverance. Paul piles up instances of the sins of the Jewish people: our Lord shows that they had made their very temple a "den of thieves." May we never so desecrate our souls.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The *Introit* (Ps. liv) says that when the psalmist called to God, He heard him, and delivered him from his foes—"cast thy care upon the Lord," it repeats, "for Himself shall care for thee." Thereupon the *Prayer* asks:

> O God, who dost manifest Thine Omnipotence most of all in sparing and in pitying, multiply upon us Thy mercy, that, running towards Thy promises, we may be made by Thee to partake in heavenly good things.

(Here is another key-word, in these Masses, along with "medicinal"—*running*. You would say that the Missal has a hate of drifting, *lounging*, slinking even in God's paths. It is better to be there than out of them: but, being in the right way, we ought to step out . . . to speed towards our goal!) The *Silent Prayer* contains the word *remedies*, and the *Post-Communion*, *repair*: these too are, then, characteristic.

In the rest of the Mass, perhaps the *Gradual* begins with a phrase of unusual tenderness and trust:—

> (Ps. xvi). Guard me, O Lord, like the apple of the eye! under the shadow of Thy wings protect Thou me. From Thy countenance let the verdict upon me proceed —let Thine eyes see the right!

I confess it seems barely possible to devise a link between the *Epistle* and the *Gospel* (I Cor. xii; Luke xviii) or between either or both of them and the rest

of the Mass. The meaning of the *Epistle* is clear—only by the Spirit of God can we say—Jesus is the Lord—that is, be *Christians*. But once we *are* Christians, many are the *divisions* of the selfsame Spirit—many the special departmental vocations with the Church. The *Gospel* relates the story of the Pharisee and the publican: it is exquisite: its lesson is clear; please God we shall learn it and not judge, nor trust to external religious respectability! At least we may connect it with the *Epistle* thus—the technique of religion without the Spirit, is useless: the Spirit will make us carry out even that technique in a living and spiritual way.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Introit. Ps. lxvii. God is in His holy place; God, who maketh men to dwell with one mind in a house, shall give courage and endurance to His people. Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered.

Prayer. Almighty everlasting God, who in the abundance of Thy lovingkindness dost exceed both the merits and the prayers of Thy suppliants, pour forth upon us Thy mercy, so as to dismiss what our conscience fears, and add what our prayer dare not presume to ask.

The other two *Prayers* have nothing very special. And the rest of the Mass dwells chiefly on the certainty of God's help—"My flesh hath flowered anew" (*Gradual*): "I called to Thee, and Thou didst heal me" (*Offertory*).

The *Epistle* (I Cor. xv) offers the list of witnesses of whom St. Paul knew, that they had seen the risen Christ, ending with his own vision of Him, and the consequent miracle of his own conversion. The *Gospel* tells how our Lord cured a deaf and dumb man (Mark vii)—a good symbol of St. Paul, who for so long had

been shutting his ears to the call of Christ, and had been keeping his lips sealed to that gospel which he was to teach in the whole world. Henceforward, parable and miracle frequently alternate in the gospels of these Masses. In each, we are wise to seek for the spiritual sense—the supernatural fact towards which they point.

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.

The *Introit* and *Gradual* are normal: the *Communion*, as so often, refers rather to the Communion just received, than to the special ideas of the Mass. But the *Offertory* is of astounding length, and contains (Ex. xxxii) Moses's intercession with God for the delinquent people. Paul, in the *Epistle* (II Cor. iii) acknowledges that the Law of Moses, graven upon stone, and the whole of that ancient dispensation (which, to him, if you compared it with the Christian life of grace) was one of death, were "glorious": the very stone, the very face of Moses shone. What then the new life, whereof he himself had been made a minister? The *Gospel* gives us one immediate hint. The Samaritan, the hated semi-pagan Samaritan, might act better than the chosen Jew did. How different already was this vision from what the older Law could have taken. Taking this along with the Prayer, may we not see that a mighty stride forward has been taken, and pray to God that we too may thus advance rapidly to understanding better still what God now asks of us, even as what He promises? We know there is now no further revelation, no new moral law to be announced: but even the Church gradually understands her unchanging dogmas better and better, and human responsibilities are now but half-guessed, now sensi-

tively appreciated: for me to *stand still* spiritually is fatal: I must go from light to light, from strength to strength, transforming myself into Christ.

Even as both the *Silent Prayer* and the *Post-Communion* look first at the present, then the future, and ask that in this Mass we may obtain forgiveness, and thus add honour to God, obtain not only expiation of the past, but protection for the future, so the *Prayer* of the Mass insists on the *forward rush* that the Holy Spirit would so like to impart to our languid limbs.

> Almighty and merciful God, from whose own gift it comes that Thy Faithful serve Thee worthily and well, grant, we pray, that we may run towards Thy promises without stumbling.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The *Introit* begs God to look back upon His "covenant"—that is, upon those with whom His covenant has been made, those to whom He has pledged Himself. His people may be "poor" enough—little esteemed in the eyes of those who do not know Him: but they *are* His people, and it is *His own* cause that He is asked to decide, for His Name, His Word, are intermingled with our fate.

The Church in the *Prayer* repeats a notion that evidently the Missal likes: "that we may be enabled to achieve what Thou dost promise, make us love what Thou dost command"; and leading up to this, "give us the increase of Faith, Hope, and Charity"—that increase of sheer redemption for which the *Post-Communion* asks, since these three supernatural virtues establish us in the habit of grace-union with our God. The *Communion* once more recalls that the Eucharist provides the chief means towards this; the *Gradual*

does little more than repeat the *Introit*, and the *Offertory* pathetically reminds the Lord that it must needs be He in whom we hope since all "our times are in His hand"—every phase and division within our fleeting life.

The lesson of the *Gospel* and *Epistle* is much the same as that of last Sunday, nor is the *Gospel* (Luke xvii) difficult to understand: the only one of the ten lepers who were cured, to show gratitude, was the despised Samaritan. The *Epistle* (Gal. iii) labours to show that our salvation is a free gift from God, looking back to God's free promise made to Abraham, and not based upon that Law, of which the Jews were so proud, and which could indeed make clear what one ought to do, but could give no help towards doing it. Paul says that God gave His word to Abraham, long before there *was* any Law. "And to his descendants!" the Jews interrupt. Paul answers the little objection in a way that suits the strange meticulous minds of the rabbis —"He did not say 'offspring' in the vague, but 'to thine offspring'—to that one offspring who is Christ!" Then he resumes. The Law, imposed 430 years later, cannot annul that promise. If we get our salvation by mere legal inheritance, we do *not* get it by free promise and gift. But it *was* based, precisely, upon promise made to Abraham. "Why then have a Law at all?" Oh, it was enacted because of sins, says he, answering this new objection by an allusion merely to a thought he has more fully worked out elsewhere (especially *Romans* ii, iii, v); the Hebrews needed a sort of sign-post to show what was sin, what not; and above all, something to make them see that the mere having a law implied no help towards observing it, and that human nature, indeed, was unable to observe it, un-

aided. Then again he resumes. The Law was an interim affair, till the destined Descendant should come: also, it is a bilateral contract, and given through that Intermediary, Moses, representing the people, and officially negotiating the affair with God (indeed, Paul suggests, using an old tradition), just as Moses represented the people, so Angel-intermediaries represented God. But God is One, and the *promise* comes entirely from His side and needs no intermediary to negotiate. Does then the Law clash with the Promises? No, no! It *would,* if life and grace could come through the law (for then were the promises annulled or superseded): but the law sums itself up in a list of prohibited sins, to resisting which it gives no help. Now that Christ has come, all you have to do is to believe in Him, make yourself over to Him, and in His person you receive what God so long ago had promised. There is but little argument of this sort in the Missal —we may be grateful. This long explanation has been given simply because the one or two epistles of this sort eclipse all too often in our memories those that are perfectly intelligible, and breed in us the notion that we cannot understand St. Paul and may as well give up the epistles as hopeless.

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

As though to compensate, this Mass is not only very beautiful but most straightforward. The *Introit* cries out to God to "look upon the face of His Christ," that Christ whose Body is the Church, so that in looking upon His Son, our eternal Father cannot now but see ourselves. "One day in Thy courts," exclaims the Missal, as it were sunning itself under that paternal gaze, "is better than a thousand" where God's glance

can see but aliens. "How dear are Thy dwellings, O Lord of strength! My soul yearns and faints towards the dwelling of the Lord." The *Gradual* too is a hymn of exultant trust, and the *Offertory* shows us as fenced with battalions of rescuing angels—"O taste, and see how sweet the Lord is!" "Seek *first* His Kingdom," the *Communion* bids us, "and all shall be added unto you. . ." All else that we want, if still we really want it, shall reach us sufficiently: but the possession of the sweetness of the Lord is apt to make us find most other things insipid.

> The *Prayer* asks: "Guard, Lord, we pray, Thy Church with Thy constantly good will; and, because without Thee our human nature slips, ever by Thy help withdraw Thou it from harm, and lead it towards what saves."

The double work of the Sacraments—the correcting of what is old and bad, and the increase of the new good life, is anew emphasised in the two other *Prayers*.

As for the *Epistle*, it sets forth in well-known words (Gal. v) the works of that human nature which, if it seeks to exclude God, Paul calls the "flesh," and those that the Spirit guides us into seeking and doing. And the *Gospel* carries our advance further yet (Mt. vi), for our Lord bids us not only seek to resist sin, and fight it out of us, but to hand over all our human anxieties to God. Seek *first* that He should be Lord within us, and we shall find that human anxieties fade away or at least have all the bitterness taken from them. In one way after another, our Lord tries to convince us that God takes care of us. Into His mind come the little birds, and He shows how exquisite to Him are the field-flowers. Transitory though they be, God intimately cares for them. How much more then for us, who are His immortal sons? It would be diffi-

cult to find a more pacifying, invigorating, sunlit Mass than this one.

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

The *Introit* is the customary appeal to God, and ends with a very frank prayer that the soul may be made happy. You will notice that the Missal is certainly anxious that you should want the right things, but has none of that false asceticism which suggests that you ought somehow to pretend that you do not want what you want. You do: ask for it, then.

> The *Prayer*. May Thine undeviating mercy, O Lord, purge and protect Thy Church, and since it cannot stand safe without Thee, govern it always by Thy gift.

The *Silent Prayer* concentrates on that "protection," especially against "Satanic infection." All lives influence one another; so do all *minds*. Evil spirits are minds, and can *infect* us mentally. They can even *possess* us; and the *Post-Communion* asks that the—

> "activity of Thy heavenly Gift may take possession of our minds and bodies, so that *its* effects may always come first in us, and not our own impressions."

Here and there, the Latin of the Missal is difficult to translate, for it was a language in process of transition, and it was having to adapt its older Roman narrowness to express *moods* and interior states of the personality which were new. Christianity not only enabled men to take stock of themselves as never yet they had done —to see not only more widely but more deeply—but it was actually transforming them. One revelation that it made, just in proportion as it made men more aware of *themselves* was, that there is an isolated self-consciousness that is bad. We have not only to be led by

moods and feelings: and the Christian faith not only provides a certain exterior authority of a nature like our own, but teaches that a grace-world, a supernatural life is intended for us by God. Herein, all the initiative is God's. We pray that He may indeed take always, and to the full, His initiative.

St. Paul in the fifth chapter of Galatians gives, this time, very simple advice, and even, with his grave and gentle humour (it seems to me) uses contradictory proverbs to illustrate his point. "Carry ye one another's burdens": and "Each man must carry his own burden!" You harmonise these thus. When you see another in temptation, help him. You, too, may one day be tempted! But again, don't be too proud. Test yourselves and your work. Your works are your own works. You can help another, but not shift your personal responsibility to him. Beware! if you sow corruption, corruption shall you reap. But forthwith the *Gospel* in its goodness (Luke vii) reminds us that our Lord can not only heal the sick, but raise the very dead to life. O Lord, if I sin mortally, raise me to life. Assuredly the dead cannot take initiatives. Christ *must* do so, if I am to live at all. But the very fact that I want to re-live, proves that He has already taken His initiative. And indeed He is all the while taking it.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

After the humble cry of the *Introit*, the *Prayer* begs that:—

> "Thy grace, O Lord, may ever go before us and behind, and cause us ever to be intent upon good works." The rest of the Mass is simple.

The *Epistle* (Eph. iii) dwells on our Christian life in

each, but also in all. Paul kneels for his beloved and anxious converts to "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom all *familyhood* draws its name, whether in heaven or on earth"—the simplest human relationships derive their reality and goodness from God, and so does that supreme unity among men that Grace creates:—

> That He may enrich you on the scale of the richness of His own glory, that you be fortified powerfully by His Spirit right into your innermost, till Christ dwells in your hearts, by faith—rooted in charity and founded thereon —that you may understand—you, and all Christians with you—what is the breadth, and the length, and height and depth—ah, understand what is that Love of Christ that outstrips all understanding, that you be full-filled up to the measure of the fulness of God. To Him, then, who is able to do all things far, far beyond what we ask, or even understand—on the scale of that Power of His that is working within us—to Him be glory in the Church, and in Christ Jesus, for ever!*

The *Gospel* (Luke xiv) seems in no way connected with this epistle or the rest of the Mass. Let it suffice that it contains a lesson of humility. We cannot grasp —we can scarcely desire—the tremendous things of which Paul speaks. Let us present ourselves quite simply, then, to our Lord, as devoid both of intelligence and of desire such as He deserves of us, and beg Him none the less to accept us. He will do so, and promote us little by little to the intimacy of His friendship.

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost.

The *Prayer* renews the petition that we be saved from diabolic infection; the *Silent Prayer*, that we be divested alike of present and future faults; the *Post-*

* Part of this has now become the Epistle for the Mass of the Sacred Heart.

Communion, that by God's sanctifying treatment our defects may be healed, and that eternal remedies may be forthcoming unto us. In *Gradual* and *Communion* there seems to me an echo of this fear of evil spirits—the very heavens derive their strength from the Spirit of *God,* and as for the princes of this "world," God takes *their* spirit from them. Perhaps it helps, at times, to reflect how much *more* real is the invisible spiritual world, than ours.

St. Paul writes from prison to the Ephesians (iv) insisting on the super-unity of the Christian Church: and even as in human units it is always a common mind, a one-ness of thought and will, that produces the essential unity, so here it is the one Spirit, the One God who is not only over all, but through all—pervasive through the whole, and "in us," all and each—who makes us truly to be what we are. The Gospel (Mt. xxii) sums up the whole Law in "love," love for God and for one's neighbour; and then provides perhaps the hint that nowhere save in Christ does the source of such a love exist, nowhence save from Him can it be derived.

Wednesday of the September Ember Days.

The idea of these three days gathers up the human facts of harvest and vintage, and the more spiritual one of ordinations—new priests are being made, who shall offer the trans-substantiated Bread and Wine, and must make, too, of Christians a One Bread, one Chalice, for the Lord.

It might startle us, were we not by now aware of the robust realism of the Missal, to find the *Introit* and the *Communion* (which repeats the end of the *Epistle*) frankly recognising the season as one of jollity and

mirth. Happy were the times when any rustic gaiety was not such as to be out of keeping with spiritual light-heartedness. The total life of a parish—prayer, work, sport—made a harmony. The first reading (Amos ix) describes the Messianic days entirely in terms of grain and vineyard and garden—in vivid contrast, presumably, to his home in Tekoa where in a world of rocks he had pruned wild fig-trees and struggled with the stones and wild beasts of the Jordan wilderness. "Ploughman shall catch up with harvester —he that treads the clusters, him that sows the seed: the mountains shall distill sweetness, and every hill shall be tilled." The very people shall be like a tree planted by God in its proper soil, never to be rooted up. The second reading is from II Esdras, viii, when the Law of Moses was read aloud to the Israelites home from exile at the beginning of the "seventh month," and the people were dismissed to feast. The variable parts of the Mass, too, have this colour of "blessing" given to a people that fears the Lord.

To all this there is a grave counterpart. The *Gospel* (Mark ix) definitely teaches that there is *that* which cannot be got rid of save "by prayer and fasting"; and the *Prayers* of the Mass recall that after all, inserted into this season of joyance, are three fast-days.

The first *Prayer* asks that the frailty of our mortal condition being always ground down to earth (as by its own weight) may be made to hold its ground by God's merciful remedies, and by His clemency restored. The second prayer asks as usual that as we abstain from food, so may we fast from sin. The *Silent Prayer* repeats words already used, and asks that our sins be rinsed out of us and our bodies and minds may be sanctified. But the *Communion* probes deeper into

our nature. It acknowledges, first, that we have received heavenly gifts. Then it recalls that human ministry has conveyed them to us—"with sedulous service (but only because Thou hast granted that ministry to us) we have performed that office which is ours." Finally, it asks that by God's gift, *our interior life may adequately assimilate these gifts.* This is a sentence where the Latin contains the same thing that we modern folk appreciate, but has hardly yet struck out the words needed to express it. It is a proof of how desperately we need, through the word, to reach the *mind* of the Missal—even, what I suppose would now be called its sub-conscious mind.

Ember Friday in September.

Again the *Introit* bids us rejoice in God, and never cease to seek Him, but to give thanks to Him, and to proclaim Him among those who know Him not. The prayers are simple. So are *Gradual* and the rest. The *Epistle* is from Osee (xiv).

> "Turn back, Israel, to the Lord, thy God, for thou hast sunk down in thy sins. Carry prayers with you, turn back to the Lord and say: 'Take away the wrong; accept the good—we will offer Thee young bulls—yes! the sacrifices of our lips! It is not Assyria that shall save us: we will trust no more in cavalry: we will say no more: Our gods are what our own hands have made.' For Thou wilt have pity on the orphan who belongs to Thee. [And God replies] 'I will heal their bruises: *spontaneously will I love them*: my wrath is turned back from them.' "

God says that He will come down on them like dew, and their fruit shall be great. Even northern Ephraim shall say: "What have I any more to do with idols?" God shall direct its future! "Who," asks the prophet,

"shall understand all this? Well, the paths of the Lord are straight: the righteous shall walk therein with ease: only the perverse shall stumble."

The *Gospel* (Luke vii) relates one of our Lord's great forgivenesses. The sinful woman found pardon: the Pharisaic host had shown no such love as she had.

EMBER SATURDAY IN SEPTEMBER.

The thoughts of the *Prayers* are not new: but they contain some striking phrases: our "wholesome abstinence" is God's method of "healing us both in body and in mind": "may we, by fasting, be filled full of Thy grace: and by our abstinence, may we be made stronger than all our enemies": "may we fast from the vices that plunge upon us": (*Post-Communion*).

> May Thy sacraments, O Lord, accomplish in us what they contain: and that which now we perform symbolically, may we absorb in reality and in truth.

The variable parts of this Mass are made up entirely of familiar words, save that the *Communion* links up these September Ember days with the Feast of Tabernacles celebrated in the 7th month by the Jews.

As for the readings, the first relates the historical institution of that Feast (Lev. xxiii): it began definitely with repentance. The second reading (from the same chapter) shows how it continues with rejoicing. The remembrance was, that God had brought the Hebrews out of Egypt, and for long they had lived in tents in the wilderness: the repentance was for the many sins they had then and before and after committed; the rejoicing meant their gratitude for deliverance. The third reading is from Micheas vii, and hymns God's constant forgiveness; the fourth is from Zacharias viii,

and emphasises anew the facts of sin and of divine forgiveness, with the corresponding decencies of penance and of joy. The final reading is from the Epistle to the Hebrews (ix) in which Paul characteristically insists that all the Old Testament and its regulations were a type of the New, and are surpassed incredibly by the New. The gist of the passage is, that in the old days, priests did what they could, again and again entering the tabernacle for sacrificial purposes. Christ once and for all has offered the perfect Sacrifice. For detailed explanation of this long *Epistle* commentaries must be consulted. The *Gospel* sufficiently shows (Luke xiii) that the Old Dispensation had failed and failed again: again and again had it been tolerated: at last it was to be superseded. For very long the "daughter of Abraham" had been "bound by Satan": at last she was to be freed, and by Himself.

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

Introit. Eccl. xxxvi. Give peace, O Lord, to those who rely on Thee: may Thy spokesmen be found faithful; listen to the prayers of Thy servant and of Thy people Israel. Ps. cxxi. I was glad when they said to me: We will go in to the House of the Lord!

The *Gradual* resumes this chant, adding the prayer that there may be "peace within thy walls, prosperity among thy towers": the *Offertory* speaks of the altar Moses made for God; and the *Communion* exclaims: Take victims, and enter into His halls: worship the Lord in His holy palace. To what does all this refer if not to those ordained during these days? The *Epistle* too (I Cor. i) though not written by Paul for priests, suits, in what it prays for, new priests exceptionally well; and the *Gospel* (Mt. viii) refers to that

power of forgiving sins which Christ possessed on earth in His own right, and which He delegated to His representatives in the Church.

The *Prayer* is general: "May the working of Thy mercy direct our hearts, O Lord, for without Thee we cannot please Thee."

And the *Silent Prayer* introduces sufficiently the thought of Mass and of Communion into this ordination season.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The *Introit* here is not the prayer of God's servant for help, but the assurance given by God that that help will be forthcoming.

"The salvation of the People is Myself . . . from whatsoever woe they call upon me, I will hear them: and I will be their God for ever."

This is answered in the *Offertory*:

"Though I walk through the midst of woe, Thou shalt give me life, O Lord: Thou shalt stretch out Thy hand over the wrath of my enemies and Thy right hand shall save me."

The *Gradual* promises prayer to Him, and the *Communion*, an endeavour to keep His laws. Such is the due response of the Christian: but here the initiative has been with God.

Trustfully therefore, the *Prayer* can ask: Almighty and merciful God, graciously shut out from us everything that may hurt us; so that free of mind and body alike, we may with minds at ease pursue the things that are Thine.

And the *Post-Communion*: May Thy healing work, O Lord, mercifully rid us of our perversities, and make us ever cling close to Thy commandments.

The *Epistle* (Eph. iv) bids us be renewed in "the spirit of our minds," thus forming the new race of men. Let us speak truth; if we grow angry, let us conquer that, and sin not. Let us give no loophole to the devil, and far from stealing, let us work with our hands and be able actually to give to him that needs.

The link between this and the *Gospel* (Mt. xxii) may be merely the likeness between Paul's metaphor: "Put on the New Man," and the parable of the wedding-garment. The first meaning of the parable is, that the Jews, having rejected the Messias, are doomed: the despised Gentiles shall be brought in to the marriage from their Pagan byways. The next implication is, that Jew or Pagan, Grace must clothe the soul before it can really assist as guest at that divine feast. Where Grace is, there is "no more Jew versus Pagan," nor any opposition between those who combine to form the Body of the Lord.

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost.

Introit. Dan. iii. All things that Thou hast done to us, O Lord, were done in exact justice, for we had sinned against Thee and not obeyed Thy commands. But now give glory to Thy Name, and deal with us according to the multitude of Thy mercy. Ps. cxviii. O the blessedness of those that are stainless in their path—who walk in the Law of the Lord.

The *Gradual* cries first that the gaze of all is hopefully upon the Lord:—

'Thou givest them their food when they need it—Thou openest Thy hand, and fillest every living thing with blessing." So: Ps. cvii. "My heart is ready, O Lord, my heart is ready: I will sing and make hymn to Thee, O Thou my glory!"

Daniel was confessing in exile that the disasters of

Israel were deserved: the *Offertory* speaks as from that exile:—

"By the streams of Babylon we sat and wept, when we remembered Thee, O Jerusalem!"

But the *Communion* (Ps. cxviii) cries out:

"Remember what Thou saidst to me O Lord, that gave me hope! *That* gave me comfort when I was beaten down!"

There seems to me in the outline of this Mass an unusual agitation, as of men in exile indeed, but flushed with some new hope. They are *certain* that God is going to save them and give them what they need, and what they hope.

The *Epistle* (Eph. v) warns Christians to be circumspect. "The days are evil": but even so, men can be prudent as to their material circumstances, and give no offence to anyone; while with regard to God, they can give themselves free scope in their joy and in hope and thanks. The *Gospel* (John iv) relates the cure of the officer's son when all human hope had been abandoned. In all this again I seem to see justification for our regarding this as a Mass for the darkest hour, that before dawn.

The *Prayers* seem to me to be guarded. They insist much more on confession of sin, and general trust for a better future, than on any sensational rescue. And that is good religion.

"Be appeased, O Lord, and lavish on Thy Faithful forgiveness, and peace; that they may be cleansed from all offences, and serve Thee with mind at rest." "May these mysteries afford us, Lord, celestial medicine, that the vices of our heart may be purged out of it." "That we may be worthy of Thy sacred gifts, make us ever to obey Thy commandments."

Here indeed we have sober Roman objectivity!

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Introit. Esth. xiii. On Thy will, O Lord, do all things rest, and there is none who may resist Thy will: for Thou hast made everything, heaven and earth and everything that is contained under the sweep of heaven: the Lord of all the universe art Thou.
(Blessed are the stainless in their path, etc.)
Ps. lxxxix. Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another. Before the hills were made, or the earth and the world were formed, from everlasting and to everlasting Thou art God!

Then the rescue from Egypt is recalled. The *Offertory* states the theme of Job, the innocent sufferer, whom Satan had leave to test. The *Communion* surprisingly passes into complaint:—

Ps. cxviii: On Thy salvation my life depends: on Thy word do I trust: when wilt Thou do judgment upon my persecutors? the wicked are persecuting me—help me, O Lord my God!

The *Prayers* have no very special colouring: in the *Silent Prayer,* the impressive phrase "Thy *powerful* affection" is used. God's love has nothing soft or ineffectual about it.

The *Epistle* (Eph. vi) is what definitely suggests to one that Advent is casting its shadow before. After all, this is in keeping with the liturgy and its spirit. The Church does not plunge us into any of her seasons unprepared. St. Paul, just as he will in the epistle for the first Sunday of Advent, warns us that our struggle is not against mere earthly foes, but against spiritual powers, and spiritual armour is needed by us to resist them. And the *Gospel* (Mt. xviii) austerely reminds us that a day of reckoning exists, and now, all but at

the end of the Church's year, we should do well to think of this. Indeed, the spirit of Advent is almost more comforting than that of this grave Sunday.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The *Introit* carries us almost into a Lenten atmosphere with its "De Profundis," but so sombre a tone is not carried through the Mass, and indeed the *Gradual* is exultant and "social"—not the cry of the anxious individual any more. It is "good and happy to live together in fraternal unity": the oil of gladness is distilled through God's priesthood. The *Introit* of the last Mass inspires the *Offertory* of this one, and Esther prays that the Lord, whose power is supreme over all other lordships, will put right words into her mouth, that she may speak what will win the heart of the prince. (Since readers of this book will not have the priests' breviary accessible, unless they be themselves priests, I think it better not to seek to forge any links between the liturgy of the Mass and that of the priestly office, as else might here, for example, be done.)

The thoughts and the very words of the *Prayers* are familiar; the *Epistle* is meant to cheer us: St. Paul (Phil. i) is confident that God, who has "begun a good work in us" will be amply able to bring it to completion. Paul prays therefore, that his converts may find their charity ever increasing, but ever doing so along with all true knowledge and understanding, so that they test and take ever what is not only good, but the better; that they be *undiluted*; that they hold out, without stumbling, till the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness through Him. Who can fail to feel that the circle of the year is running its course out, and that we shall be right to look forward to the end

and to pray for perseverance during its last weeks? During them, as the *Gospel* (Mt. xxii) forcibly insists, let us give God what belongs to Him and never rob His altar.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Here the liturgy definitely uplifts us, and comforts our growing sense of anxiety lest, having passed through the Church's year, we have misused our graces.

> *Introit.* Jer. xxix. I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord—thoughts of peace and not of punishment; you shall call on Me, and I will hear you, and bring back your captives from all their exile. Ps. lxxxiv. Thou hast blessed, O Lord, Thy land; Thou hast brought home the captives of Israel.

The *Gradual* repeats that God has freed His people, and shall be praised all the day long; but relapses, and so does the *Offertory*, into the De Profundis of the last Mass. Surely one of the most artistic things about the Missal is the way in which it will not allow one mood to *oust* another? It recalls, and it prepares. The *Communion* encourages the soul, perhaps too ready to slip back into anxieties:—

> "Amen, I say to you—whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you will receive it, and it shall be done unto you."

The *Epistle* is from the exquisite third chapter of Philippians. With what humble reliance Paul tells his Christians to model themselves on *him* . . . though also those who observe the Christian Law, and are not, as he confesses with tears that *some* are, "enemies of Christ's cross."

> "Our whole way of life must be heavenly—for from heaven we await our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall re-

model this lowly body of ours, and make it like to the Body of His glory, according to that mighty working whereby He can subordinate all things to Himself."

And the *Gospel* (Mt. ix) relates the cure of the poor intimidated woman with her woeful secret illness, and the raising of the officer's little daughter to life.

The sober *Prayers* ask but that we should lovingly be freed from the net of sins in which through our frailty we have immeshed ourselves; that God, who gave His sacramental gift to us who utterly did not merit it, would follow out that work of His! and that we, admitted to share in divine things, should not be exposed to succumb to human perils.

TWENTY-FOURTH AND LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The *Introit* is as before, anticipating the theme of mercy, heard throughout Advent. All the other variable parts of the Mass, save *Prayers* and *Epistle* and *Gospel* are the same as in the last Mass.

The *Epistle* (Col. i) is at once so beautiful and so simple as to need neither quotation nor explanation: again, its theme is growth, and its hint of the true light in which we ought to live, albeit surrounded by the darkness of this world and its enthralment, anticipates the thoughts of Advent. The *Gospel* definitely turns our mind to that Coming of our Lord which for the Jews of that generation was to be discerned in the sack of their city, which comes for each of us at his death, and for the world at the Last Day (Mt. xxiv).

The *Prayers* are:

Arouse, we pray, O Lord, the wills of Thy Faithful: so that seeking ever more earnestly the fruits of the divine work (this means, Christ's Redemption, and its application in Mass, and our personal sanctification)

they may receive ever more powerful remedies from Thine affection. Be propitious, O Lord, to our supplications, and to the offerings of Thy people; accept our prayers, and turn the hearts of all of us to Thee; so that, freed from earthly passions, we may pass over unto heavenly desires. Grant us, O Lord, we pray, that through the sacraments we have received; whatsoever in our minds is spoiled, may by the gift of their healing, be made whole.

With these calm and inclusive prayers, the Year of Mass is concluded.

PART III

A PART of the Missal that I fear we seldom use consists of Votive Masses—those, that is, which ask special favours and do not belong to Sundays or feast days. There are entire Masses, and also, special prayers which can be inserted into ordinary Masses. The Mass for "Choosing a Sovereign Pontiff" cannot be used often, but shows what the Church feels about her visible Head, and connected with it is the Mass used on the anniversary of the election or consecration of a Bishop, and there are the special prayers "For all Ranks in the Church," for the pope, and for prelates. These can be taken as a group.

The MASS FOR CHOOSING A SOVEREIGN PONTIFF has this forcible *Introit*:—

> (I Kings ii and Ps. cxxxi). "I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall act according to My heart and mind: and I will build him a faithful house and he shall walk before Mine Anointed all the days of his life. Remember, O Lord, David, and his ready obedience."

The *Gradual* (Levit xxi and Hebr. ii and again Levit. xxi). A Pontiff is a High Priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil has been poured forth, and whose hands are consecrated in the priesthood, and who is clothed with holy raiment. He had to be at all points made like to his brethren, that he might be merciful, and a faithful priest to God, and make expiation for the sins of the people. Let the priest be holy, even as I am holy, I, the Lord who do

make you holy. (At Easter, naturally the Good Shepherd is alluded to.) The *Offertory* from III Esdras c, says:

"They shall not have part in the holy things, till a Pontiff shall arise who shall show them truth."

And the *Communion.* Exodus xxix. The Pontiff, who shall have been set up, shall array himself in holy vestments, and shall enter the Tent of Witness, to minister in the sanctuary.

The *Prayers* are: With suppliant humility we beseech Thee, O Lord, that Thine unbounded loyal love would grant to the most holy Roman Church the Pontiff who for his loving care for us, shall always be agreeable to Thee, and may be ever and always venerable in the eyes of Thy people for his healthful government, unto the glory of Thy Name. May the abundance of Thy love for us, O Lord, allow that through the sacred gifts that we reverently offer Thee, we may rejoice that a Pontiff pleasing to Thy Majesty is ruling over the government of Thy Church. May the marvellous grace of Thy Majesty, O Lord, give joy to us, who have been refreshed with the Sacrament of Thy precious body and blood, in the gift of a Supreme Pontiff who shall not only build up Thy people with every virtue, but steep the minds of Thy Faithful with the perfume of spiritual fragrance.

The *Epistle* is taken from the beautiful fourth and fifth chapters of the Letter to the Hebrews.

"Every high priest" (we are reminded) "that is chosen from among men, is established on behalf of men in what regards God, to offer gifts, and sacrifice for sin; and able to sympathise with those who are ignorant, or who err, seeing that he himself is girt about with weakness. . . Nor does any man take this honour to himself, but he who has been called by God. Even Christ did not give glory to Himself, but He who spoke to Him—'Thou art My Son'— . . . Christ who in the days of His flesh did offer prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears to Him who could save Him from death—Christ then was heard because of this His reverence."

The *Gospel* is taken from that priestly prayer of Our Lord that is enshrined in St. John, chapter xiv, beginning at: "If you love Me, keep My commandments."

The Mass that follows contains *Prayers* that can be used either for pope or for bishop, and are in fact the ordinary ones used on behalf of the Sovereign Pontiff.

> "O God, Shepherd and Governor of all the Faithful, look in mercy upon Thy servant N. whom Thou hast willed to preside over Thy Church: grant to him, we pray, that by word and work he may be of avail unto those over whom he is set, so that together with the flock entrusted to him he may attain to everlasting life. Be pleased, O Lord, with the gifts that we have offered Thee, and with ceaseless protection govern Thy servant N. whom Thou hast willed to preside over Thy Church. May our receiving of the Divine Sacrament, O Lord, protect us; and may it for ever save and defend Thy servant N., together with the flock entrusted to him, whom Thou hast willed to preside over Thy Church."

[When the subject of these prayers is a bishop but not pope, the name of his diocese is inserted after the word "church."] The Mass is the second from the Common of Pontiff Confessors; the *Epistle* is from Hebrews v (as above partly) and the *Gospel* from St. Mark xiii, on the essential duty of "watching," especially in those to whom a house has been entrusted in its master's absence.

The *Prayers* for "every grade in the Church" are:—

> Almighty, everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is sanctified and ruled, grant our prayer on behalf of every Order, that by the gift of Thy grace, Thou mayest receive faithful service from every rank. Grant to Thy servants, O Lord, forgiveness of sins, consolation in life, and unceasingly govern them, so that, by serving Thee, they may unfailingly be enabled to attain unto Thy mercy. Rescue, O Lord, Thy servants

that pray to Thee from sins and enemies, that living in all holiness, they may be injured by no adversity.

The *Prayers* for Prelates (*i.e.*, religious superiors of every sort) and their "families" or flocks are:—

Almighty and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels, send forth upon Thy servants and upon the congregations entrusted to them, the spirit of saving grace; and, that in very truth they may be pleasing to Thee, pour on to them the continual dew of Thy blessing.

(The others have nothing very special about them.) I will add to these prayers, those which the priest has the right to say "For Himself."

Almighty and Merciful God, graciously attend to the prayers of my humility, and me Thy servant—whom, with no merits of my own to plead for me, but by the generosity of Thine immense clemency, Thou hast granted to minister to the heavenly mysteries,—make Thou a worthy minister at the sacred altar, that what by my voice is uttered, may by Thy consecration be confirmed. By the power of this Sacrament, O Lord, cleanse ever the stains of my sins, that Thy grace may make me worthy for the fulfilment of the ministry of the office that has been given me. Almighty everlasting God, who didst will that I, a sinner, should take my stand at Thine altar and should praise the power of Thy Holy Name, graciously grant, through the mystery of this Sacrament, the remission of my sins, so that I may worthily serve Thy Majesty.

There can be no doubt as to how intensely the Church wishes her Head to be prayed for: nor can we doubt but that the knowledge that he *is* prayed for, is the supreme consolation to the loneliest man in the world. In his measure, every bishop or superior or even simple priest trusts beyond everything else to prayer—and knowing how weak his own are, to the united prayers of those for whom he is responsible.

Let us make full use of this part, then, of the Missal.

Immediately after the Mass for the clergy is one against SCHISM. Indeed, can anything more directly contrary to Communion be imagined, than schism? Our Lord is all that unites—schism, what divides. The *Epistle* is the noble fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the *Gospel,* from the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. Their meaning is clear, nor need they be quoted, but they should often be meditated. The *Offertory* and the *Communion* are admirably to the point:

> May God grant you to be of one mind, one towards another; so that with one soul and one mouth you may give honour to our God. We, though many, are one Bread, one Body, all of us who share in the One Bread and the One Chalice. (Rom. xv; I Cor. x.)

The *Prayers* are perfect: O God, who makest straight the crooked, and gatherest what is scattered, and guardest what is gathered, mercifully pour forth, we pray Thee, over the Christian Folk the grace of Thy Union, that they may eschew division and, uniting themselves to the true Pastor of Thy Church, may find strength worthily to serve Thee. Sanctify, O Lord, these gifts offered to Thee for the unity of the Christian People, and through them grant us, in Thy Church, the gifts of unity and peace. This Thy Holy Communion, O Lord, that we have made, even as it forthshows the union of the Faithful within Thee, so within Thy Church, we pray, may it achieve the effect of actual unity.

Among the special *Prayers,* after the very simple ones "for congregation or family," are others definitely for the preservation of "concord" therein.

> O God, giver of peace and lover of charity, grant to Thy servants true one-heartedness with Thy will, that we may be freed from all temptations that beat upon us.

Post-Communion. Pour into us, O Lord, the spirit of Thy Charity, that Thou wouldst make those, whom Thou hast fed with the One Bread, one-hearted by Thy love.

Allied with these are the *Prayers* for charity, for one's friends, and for one's enemies.

O God who makest all things to avail for those who love Thee, grant to our hearts an inviolable devout love for Thee, that the desires, born by Thine inspiration, may be unalterable under any temptation. O God, who by sacraments and doctrine renewest us unto Thine own image, make perfect our goings in Thy paths, so that the gift of charity, which Thou hast caused us to hope for, may, through this sacrifice that we are offering, be caused truthfully to be laid hold upon by us. May the grace of the Holy Spirit we pray Thee, Lord, put light into our hearts, and abundantly refresh them with the sweetness of perfect charity. O God, who through the grace of the Holy Spirit didst pour the gifts of Thy charity into the hearts of the Faithful, grant to Thy servants, men and women, for whom we are imploring Thy mercy, health of mind and body, that they may love Thee with all their strength, and with all affection carry out all that pleaseth Thee. God, lover and guardian of peace and charity, grant to all our enemies peace and true charity, and give them pardon for all their sins, and powerfully snatch us from their treachery.

If then we want to single out one topic on which the Missal insists, showing how preoccupied its "mind" must be with it, it is this one of Charity, Peace, and Union.

Connected with this, clearly, are the Masses for Peace, against War, against the Pagans (viewed as attacking Christendom), and the *Prayers* for Emperor or King, against persecutors of the Church or of ourselves, and for humility and patience. These Masses and Prayers are very straightforward and as will already have been noticed, hold together and need no

thread of "argument" to be supplied. Each has its definite theme, and this dictates their composition. So I will but mention one or two features of special beauty. Their *Prayers* are always beautiful:—

Almighty eternal God, in whose hand lies any man's power, who holdest the rights over every kingdom, turn to the help of Christians, that the peoples of the pagans who trust but in their fierceness, may be subdued by Thy right hand of might. O Thou our Protector, God, look upon us: and defend Thy champions from pagan perils; so that all anxiety may be taken away and that they may serve Thee with freedom of mind. O God, O Monarch of all kings and kingdoms, who by striking us dost heal us, and by pardoning dost preserve, extend to us Thy mercy, so that we may use the tranquillity of peace, ensured to us by Thy power, to correct and cure ourselves. O God, from whom come holy desires, rightful plans, and all just action, grant to Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be given over to Thy commandments, and, all fear of foe removed, that the times under Thy protection may be quiet. O God, maker and lover of peace, whom to know, is life, whom to serve is kingship, protect Thy suppliants from every onslaught, that we who trust in Thy defending, may fear no hostile sword. O God, who resistest the proud and to the humble givest grace, grant unto us the virtue of true humility, whereof Thy Sole-Begotten provided for His Faithful the perfect model in Himself; so that never may we provoke Thine indignation by any insolence, but rather in subjection take hold upon Thy gifts. May this offering, O Lord, we pray, obtain for us the grace of true humility, and therewith take away from our hearts the lust of the flesh and of the eyes, and the ambition of this world, so that living soberly, righteously and dutifully, we may achieve rewards that are eternal. O God, who by the patience of Thy Sole-Begotten didst crush our ancient foe, grant us, we pray, worthily to recall what He so lovingly bore for our sake, that so by His example we may with equal

mind support what irks us. May the most sacred mysteries, O Lord, that we have received, regain for us, we pray, the grace that we have lost, and impart to us, by ever and everywhere protecting us, the gift of patience in all that falls upon us.

Besides the poignant cries and entreaties taken from the psalms—so much more meaningful if we have some knowledge of the history and spirit of the Jews—I would emphasise the noble prayer of Mardochaeus (Esther xiii) which makes the *Epistle* for the Mass AGAINST PAGANS, and the pathetic letter of the Jews in Judaea to those in Egypt (Mac. ii, i) which is the *Epistle* for that for PEACE.

Along with the plague of war, is that of SICKNESS. The prayers of the Mass against this rather surprisingly make no direct mention of physical sickness, but beg wholly that God's punishments for sins may be diverted by due penance—a notion to which we shall return below. On the other hand, the prayers against FAMINE—these three disasters in the old and even the modern world are habitually united—War breeds famine; and famine, plague—are very direct:

Grant, we pray Thee, Lord, due consequence to our dutiful prayer, and mercifully turn aside the famine, that the hearts of mortals may realise that these scourges both proceed from Thy wrath, and, at Thy pitying, cease. O God, who by the food we now offer Thee, dost invigorate, and by its Sacrament dost renovate, the two-fold nature of mankind, grant that our offering may not fail to help our bodies, nor yet our souls.

The *Prayers* for particular classes of men are full of grave tenderness, as the morning office of Good Friday would prepare us to expect.

The prayers in the MASS FOR THE SICK are as follows:

Almighty everlasting God, eternal salvation of them that do believe, hearken to us on behalf of Thy sick servants for whom we ask the help of Thy mercy. Give them back their health, that in Thy Church they may return Thee thanks. O God, at whose decrees the moments of our lives run by, accept the prayers and offerings of Thy servants, for whom in their sickness we implore Thy mercy, that even as we fear for them in their peril, so we may rejoice in their recovery. O God, who like none other standest guard over human weakness, show forth the power of Thy help over Thy sick servants, that aided by the succour of Thy mercy, they may present themselves safe and sound before Thy holy Church."

If the sick man is very near to death, the following are said:—

"Almighty and merciful God, who hast given to the human race both remedies unto health, and the gift of eternal life, look kindly upon Thy servant suffering from bodily infirmity, and encourage the soul Thou didst create, that in the hour of its going forth, it may deserve to be presented by the hands of Thy holy Angels unto Thee its Creator, without stain of sin. We beg Thy mercy, almighty God, that by the virtue of this Sacrament, Thou wouldst deign to establish Thy servant with Thy grace, that in the hour of his death the Enemy prevail not over him, but, in company with Thine Angels, he may be enabled to pass over into life."

How kindly too are the *Prayers* for PRISONERS:—

O God, who didst free blessed Peter the Apostle from his chains and cause him to go away unharmed, break the bonds of Thy servant who is kept in captivity, and, by St. Peter's merits cause him, too, to depart unharmed. May a rich blessing descend, O Lord, we pray, upon these offerings, so as to break this prisoner's bonds and quickly give us joy in his deliverance.

Although one would say that the Church assumes the innocence of this prisoner (as of one captured by

Saracens or the like), yet the essence of his state does not depend on that, and not all prisoners, whom Christ bids us visit, are innocent. Indeed, the guilty need our prayers more than the others do.

Travellers have an entire Mass to themselves as well as a separate Travel-Prayer. The *Prayers* in the Mass are singularly fine:—

> Attend, O Lord, to our entreaties, and dispose the path of Thy servants in Thy prosperity and safety, that among all the chances of this world and way, they may ever be protected by Thy help. Be pleased, O Lord, by our entreaties, and in Thy kindness accept this offering which we make to Thee for Thy servants. Send Thy grace before them, to guide their going, and deign to send it after them to companion them, so that according to the safeguard of Thy mercy, we may rejoice both that they are safe, and in what they have achieved.

For those at Sea:—

> O God, who didst carry our forefathers across the Red Sea, and bear them over the mighty waters, singing praises to Thy Name, Thee suppliantly we pray, that Thou wouldst guard Thy servants in (this) ship, wouldst dispel adversities, and give them a tranquil course and the harbour they so constantly desire. Sanctified by this holy mystery, we suppliantly implore Thy Majesty, O Lord, and ask, that Thy servants whom Thou causest to be remembered in these heavenly gifts, through the wood of the Holy Cross, may by Thee be drawn away from sin, and by Thy pity be snatched from every peril.

The Mass for Bride and Bridegroom had best, perhaps, be studied in connection with the Marriage Service: here we shall but add that prayer which sums up our requests on behalf of all living men and women.

> "Extend, O Lord, the hand of heavenly help unto Thy Faithful, that with all their heart they constantly may seek Thee, and obtain what they worthily do ask. Be

pleased, O Lord, by our entreaties, and in kindness accept these offerings of Thy Faithful, which we offer Thee for their safety; and that the prayer of none may be made void, that the request of none may come to naught, we pray Thee, grant that what we trustfully do ask, we may effectually obtain. Grant to Thy Faithful, we beseech Thee, Lord, perseverance in faith and loyalty towards Thee, so that, founded upon divine charity, they may be torn or seduced therefrom by no temptation whatsoever."

The MASS FOR A GOOD DEATH and the Prayers for the living and dead make a bridge to the MASSES FOR THE DEAD themselves. "Give light," prays the *Introit*, "to my eyes, lest ever I sleep in death, lest ever the enemy say: 'I have prevailed against him.'" The *Gradual* is composed of beautiful and familiar words, and the *Offertory* sings:—

"In Thee do I hope, O Lord: I have declared that 'tis Thou that art my God, and in Thy hand are my days."

The *Prayers* are practically identical with those quoted above as said for a man extremely sick. Magnificent are the concluding prayers for "All, both Living and Dead."

Almighty, everlasting God, Lord both of living and of dead, Who on all alike hast pity, if but Thou dost foreknow that in faith and work they are to be Thine own, suppliantly we implore Thee, that they for whom we have resolved to make our prayer (whether the present world still holds them fast in flesh, or whether the world to come hath welcomed them divested already of their body) may at the intercession of all Thy Saints and by the clemency of Thy pity achieve forgiveness for all their sins. O God, to whom alone is known the number of the chosen who are to find their home in heavenly happiness, grant, we beseech Thee, that at the intercession of all Thy Saints, the Book of Blissful Predestination may find written within it the names of all those whom we have had commended to our prayers, and of all the Faithful.

Almighty and merciful Lord, may the Sacraments we have received purify us; and grant at the intercession of all Thy Saints, that this Thy Sacrament be not unto us for condemnation and for penalty, but healthful pleading for pardon: be it the washing away of guilt, the strength of the frail, a stronghold against all the perils of the world, and the remission of sins for the Faithful both living and dead, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Masses for the Dead are so well known that it is hardly necessary to translate them all. Yet every verse and word, even, has its significance. Can you not, for example, place the psalm-verse of the *Introit* upon the lips of the praying soul in Purgatory, wistfully looking to God if He be hastening its admission to the heavenly City and yet hardly daring, in its humility, to ask outright for that favour. "Fitting were it that in Sion should Thy hymns be sung, O God, and that in Jerusalem Thy worship should be paid. Ah grant my prayer . . . to Thee must all flesh come!" Sooner or later, the saved soul *must* stand before Him: might not that time be shortened? "Lord, how long?" It is in these Masses that the dramatic element finds its most vigorous expression. In the *Gradual* you would say that the soul was still in jeopardy:

"Absolve, O Lord, the souls of all the Faithful departed from every band of sin, and through the succour of Thy grace, may they evade the verdict of vengeance, and may they enduringly enjoy the bliss of endless light."

Still more vividly is this put in the *Offertory-chant*:

"Lord Jesus Christ, king of glory, set free the souls of all the Faithful departed from the pains of hell and from the unfathomed pit: save them from the jaws of the lion, lest the abyss swallow them, lest they sink into the Dark: nay, let Thy standard-bearer Michael escort

them into the holy light, that light which of old Thou didst promise to Abraham and to his seed."

These ancient symbolisms may be less to our taste to-day than the far simpler associations of the "Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord . . . May they rest in peace." And indeed of the latter are these Masses in the main constructed.

I seem to find in them a very grave austerity, and yet much tenderness. There is no hint of that futile and almost fatuous optimism which suggests that because a man has died, it must be assumed that he has been perfect and needs nothing more save praise. On the other hand, there is no pessimism. "How much soever he may have sinned," there remains always the infinite mercy of God, reaching (because of God's infinite intelligence) far beyond what we can see with our almost total ignorance of motive, and incompetence to appreciate what has been innermost in man. Hence while we acknowledge that we pass from this dim edge of existence that our world is, with an almost incredible amount of self-worship and world-worship in us, yet, also in us, please God, are those divine gifts of faith and hope and charity: and working upon these, the great purgatorial education given by God fits us gradually for our eternal destiny of happiness with Him and in Him. But because of our solidarity by reason of grace, we here on earth, still just beginning, are in organic union with those who, in Purgatory, have advanced so much further on their way. We can, then, work for them, and our Masses for the dead are no mere "memorial services." We do not merely remember people who used to live: we have no least temptation to think of them as *less alive*: they are very much more alive: yet still we can help them to reach their

plenitude of life, and of this privilege we must seek to make the fullest use, if only because of the gratitude which our brothers and sisters, living in purgatorial twilight, will forthwith feel towards us. And I conclude this part of our study of the Missal's mind by those prayers "in gratitude" which already, for our own sake, we would be but wise to say.

> O God, of whose mercy there is no reckoning, and of whose goodness the treasury is infinite, to Thy most loving Majesty we render thanks for benefits bestowed: and ever do we supplicate Thy clemency that Thou who to them that ask dost not refuse their prayer, shouldst not abandon them, but prepare them for further kindnesses. O Lord, accept the fragrance of this sacrifice together with our thanksgiving, and deign to guard for ever from adversity those whom Thou hast heard and hast deigned to preserve safe, and make them to grow together in Thy service and Thy love. O God, who dost not permit that any who hope in Thee should be too much cast down, but lendest loving attention to their prayers, we thank Thee for the granting of our prayers and entreaties, and we most lovingly ask of Thee that through this, that we have just received, we may be snatched away from all adversities.

The *Prayers* concerned with storm, with earthquake, with rain, with fine weather, and with the diseases that beset animals, are equally direct in their petitions:—

> Almighty everlasting God, who lookest upon the earth and makest it to tremble, spare Thou our fear, pity Thou our supplication, that even as we have shuddered when Thy wrath shook the foundations of the earth, so we may acknowledge Thy mercy healing its afflictions. O God, who didst found the earth upon its firm foundation, accept the offerings and prayers of Thy people: remove altogether the peril of the quaking earth, and turn Thou the terrors of Thy divine anger into a remedy and salvation for mankind, that they, who come from

earth and to earth again shall go, may rejoice that through holy behaviour they have become fit for heaven. God, in whom we live, and move and have our being, grant us a suitable rain, that sufficiently assisted by the succour of the hour, we may with greater confidence seek after things eternal. Be appeased, Lord, we pray, by these offerings, and grant us the timely help of sufficient rain. We pray Thee, Almighty God, for Thy mercy, that Thou wouldst bridle the torrential rains and deign to impart to us Thy cheerful countenance. May spiritual evil, O Lord, we pray, be banished from Thy house, and let the sinister skyey storms depart. God, who hast provided solace for human labour even through dumb animals, we humbly beg Thee that Thou wouldst not allow to perish from our service those creatures without which our human nature cannot be nourished.

In considerable contrast to these are the beautifully balanced but austere prayers "in any necessity," "in any tribulation":—

God, our refuge and our strength, be present to the devout prayers of Thy Church, Thyself the Author of devotion; and grant that what we ask in faith, we may obtain in fact.

The entire MASS FOR ANY NECESSITY has the same grand characteristics.

Introit. "The salvation of the people is Myself, saith the Lord: from what affliction soever they shall cry to Me, I will listen to them, and I will be their Lord for ever. Listen, O people, to My Law, and bend your ears to the words that I speak."

Communion. "Remember Thy word unto Thy servant, Lord, wherein Thou gavest hope to me. That has been my comfort in my humiliation."

Prayers. "Mercifully show unto us, O Lord, Thine unutterable mercy, that Thou wouldst both strip us of our sins, and snatch us from the penalties that we deserve therefor." "Grant, we pray Thee, Lord, that purified of

earthly desires, we may tend towards the fulness of the heavenly Sacrament whereof we have tasted the holiness."

From the prayers for rain and so forth, we see that it is definitely the mind of the Missal, and, therefore, of the Church, that we should pray outright for temporal things, and for our simplest needs, such as fine weather. The Catholic Faith has no patience with the pseudo-philosophy which suggests that we ought only to aspire to spiritual consequences in prayer, and talks of "laws of nature" which God "cannot" interfere with. It is far sounder to think of God as immediately creating the rain—sending the earthquake, than as having nothing in reality to do with them. Though many be the intermediate links in the chain of cause and effect, God is always the First Cause of all that is and happens, and indeed, is not so as it were innumerable millennia ago merely, but is in His eternity fully and immediately present to preserve all that is, and to infuse into it not only being but activity. Moreover, in His Eternity, God knows our prayer, and disposes the sheaf of forces that issue into any event, in view of the fact that we pray and pray with faith, "to those who love Him, He *makes all things* to co-operate for good."

However, we shall also have seen that the Church sees *sin* at the back even of physical disasters. So when we pray for a cessation, for example, of earthquake, but still more, of human tragedies like war, we are well-advised first and foremost to repent.

The magnificent Mass for the Remission of Sins, and prayers to the same effect, and forthwith the prayers for virtues in which we feel ourselves still to be lacking, and finally, prayers for that separate and supreme grace of perseverance, and the Mass for the

Grace of Dying Well, might most valuably be used by us much more often.

Thou hast pity on all men, Lord, and hatest nothing of that which Thou hast made, disregarding sins when men repent, and sparing them—for Thou art our God. Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in Thee my soul confideth (*Introit*).

Be propitious, Lord, to our sins, lest ever the heathen say: "Where is their God?" Help us, Lord, our salvation; and for the sake of the honour of Thy Name, Lord, deliver us. God is a just Judge, is strong and longsuffering; surely He will not be angry every day? (*Gradual*).

Ask, and ye shall receive: seek, and ye shall find: knock and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone who asks, shall receive, and he who seeks, finds, and to him who knocks, it shall be opened (*Communion*).

The *Prayers* for this Mass are sublime.

Grant, O Lord, we pray, the petitions of Thy suppliants, and remit the sins of those who confess to Thee, that so Thou mayest grant us in Thy goodness not only pardon, but peace. To Thee, O Lord, we offer sacrifice of propitiation and of praise: that in Thy pity Thou wouldst absolve us from our sins, and then Thyself direct our hesitating hearts. Grant us, Eternal Saviour, that obtaining by these gifts forgiveness for our sins, we may henceforward avoid those sins. O God, who scornest no man, but with tender mercy art appeased through repentance in regard of no matter how great a sinner, look mercifully upon the prayers of our humility, and enlighten our hearts that we may find strength to obey Thy precepts. Almighty and most gentle God, look mercifully upon our prayers, and free our hearts from temptations to evil thoughts, that we may be made the worthy habitation of the Holy Spirit. We offer Thee these gifts, O Lord, for our salvation, that Thou wouldst cleanse our minds from foul thoughts, and preserve them uninjured, and wouldst deign to illuminate them by the grace of the Holy Spirit. O God, who givest light

to every man who cometh into this world, enlighten, we beseech Thee, our hearts by the splendour of Thy grace, that we may find strength ever to think what is worthy of Thy Majesty and pleasing thereunto, and to love Thee in sincerity. Shatter, O Lord, the chains of our sins; and, that we may sacrifice to Thee our sacrifice of praise with absolute liberty, and with pure mind, give back what aforetime thou didst give, and save us now by pardon whom thou once didst save by grace. O Lord, our helper and protector, help Thou us, and may our heart and flesh flower forth anew with the vigour of chastity and with new purity, that by this sacrifice that we have offered to Thy goodness, we may be cleansed from all temptations. Almighty and most gentle God, who for Thy thirsting people didst draw forth from the rock a fount of living water, draw forth from the hardness of our heart tears of compunction, that we may lament our sins, and may obtain, from Thy mercy, their remission.

But this preoccupation with contrition is no selfishness, The bridge to prayers for others in general and in particular comes when we are bidden pray for "public penitents" and for "the tempted and tried." Though the discipline of public penance has practically vanished, yet we may partly apply these prayers to those who have been "found out," and are suffering disgrace. Their unhappiness may be great: let us ask, even if we do not know them personally, that it make them not bitter nor cynical, but change their heart.

Almighty, everlasting God, for Thy love's sake loose the sins of Thy servants who confess to Thee; that no more the guilt of their conscience may hurt them nor earn them punishment, but that the tenderness of Thine appeasement may assist them towards pardon. O God, who makest righteous the guilty, and willest not the death of the sinner, we suppliantly implore Thy Majesty that Thou wouldst protect these Thy servants who hope

but in Thy mercy, with loving heavenly help, and with unremitting protection wouldst preserve them, that they may constantly serve Thee, and by no temptation be separated from Thee.

THE MASSES OF OUR LADY

How would the Missal like us to think about Our Lady? Look first at the general Masses, beginning with that FROM ADVENT TO CHRISTMAS.

Naturally this Mass coincides with much of the Advent Masses, especially that of the Fourth Sunday in Advent (p. 64) and that of Christmas Eve. Only, when the heavens are bidden send down God's Righteous one like dew, the "earth" into which He so gently sinks is not the world at large, but the one Maiden who was to be His Mother. "Thou hast blessed Thine earth, O Lord: Thou hast brought home Thy captive people." The obedience of Mary cancels out the indocility of Eve. The ancient curse upon the land is done away with. Thus the *Introit*. The *Communion* repeats the tremendous prophecy: "Behold, a Maiden shall conceive . . ." and states the mystery without metaphor. The Alleluia-song of the *Gradual*, and the *Offertory*, rehearse the Angel's greeting. In the *Gradual* itself is heard the splendid challenge—"Lift up your gates, ye princes! be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!" And the psalmist's timid question—"Who shall dare to ascend God's Hill, or who shall stand within His holy place?" wins its triumphant answer in the person of Our Lady, who beyond any other is "innocent in act, and of heart most pure."

The *Prayers* for the MARY-MASS from Advent to Christmas are:—

O God, who didst decree that Thy Word should, at the message of an angel, take flesh from the womb of Blessed Mary the Virgin, grant to Thy suppliants, that we who sincerely believe her to be Mother of God may be assisted by her prayers before Thee. Make strong, we pray Thee, Lord, the mysteries of the Faith within our minds; that we who acknowledge the true God conceived as Man from a Virgin, may through the power of His saving Resurrection, be enabled to attain to eternal happiness. Pour, we beseech Thee Lord, Thy grace into our minds, that we who at the message of the angel have had knowledge of the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son, may by His Passion and Cross be brought through to the glory of our Resurrection.

The *Epistle* recalls the prophecy of Isaias, and the *Gospel,* the Annunciation. There is a snowy whiteness in this Mass that cannot escape us: but neither must we shun the clear understanding that purity for God's sake is supremely fruitful: the most perfect Virgin is the most perfect Mother; and it was that she might be *that,* that she was kept so pure. Every Catholic renunciation is in favour of something better still: there is no barren *negation* about our Faith. It is as though straight from the fields of snow springs the green blade.

In the Masses that follow, there is more "stateliness." The Roman liturgy never, dare I put it, *cheapens* Mary. To her stainless Maidenhood, it offers the gentlest reverence: to her Motherhood, always something of that homage which the Queen of men and angels merits. Much use is made of that Marriage Hymn, Ps. 44, in which the ancient Hebrews certainly saw not only the wedlock of king and of princess, but of God and His people (else they would never have included it in their scriptures) and in which we are entitled to discern the yet more marvellous

espousal of Mary to her God. The *Introit* of the MARY-MASS FROM CHRISTMAS TO PURIFICATION is drawn wholly from that psalm:

> "Before thy face all the great ones of the people bow: in her train shall maidens be brought unto the King: her kindred shall be led to Thee with joy and exultation."

This rapid shifting of the point of view is most Hebrew. The heart speaks first *to* Mary—then exclaims *about* her—then addresses its King concerning her. And Mary answers: "My own heart is brimming with a noble song—all that I do, unto the King I tell it." Thus may we apply the ancient words; and again in the *Gradual:* "Fair art Thou beyond the sons of men: grace is poured forth upon Thy lips." But now we may reverently hear these words as from Mary's voice itself, as she kisses her little son. The *Epistle* (it is the same as that for the Second Mass for Christmas), not only contains the exquisite words of St. Paul to Titus: "The kindness and human-ness of God our Saviour hath appeared," but by its words about baptism—"according to His loving-kindness He hath saved us, by means of the Bath of the New Birth, and the Renewing of the Holy Spirit whom He hath abundantly poured forth into us through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that made righteous by His Grace we might be heirs-in-hope of Life Eternal"—we are reminded that we too are Christ's brothers, and Mary's children, and on our own lips may claim to have that Mother's kiss. The *Gospel* is the story of the shepherds, that all children love.

The *Prayers* for this Mass are:—

> O God, who by the Child of Blessed Mary's Maidenhood, hast given the prize of eternal salvation to the human race, grant, we pray, that we may experience that

she is interceding for us before Thee, through whom we have been enabled to accept the Giver of Life, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Thou hast accepted, Lord, our gifts and prayers: we beg Thee, cleanse us by the heavenly mysteries, and in mercy answer us. May this Communion, Lord, cleanse us from guilt, and at the intercession of the blessed Virgin, Mary, Mother of God, may it give us a share in its heavenly healing.

The rest of this Mass consists of cries of honour addressed to Our Lady—"After bearing thy Child, thou remainedst Virgin-inviolate: Mother of God, intercede for us" (*Gradual*). "Happy are thou, indeed, O Mary Virgin consecrate, and of all praise most worthy: since from thee arose the Sun of Righteousness, even Christ, our Lord" (*Offertory*). "Blessed the womb of Mary Virgin, that did bear the Eternal God's own Son!" (*Communion*). When this Mass is said after Septuagesima, for the Alleluia-chant in the Gradual is substituted: "Rejoice, Virgin Mary! in thy sole person are destroyed all heresies, Thou that didst believe the word of Gabriel. For, a Virgin, thou didst bear Him who was God and man, and after bearing, didst remain Virgin-inviolate! God's Mother, pray for us." (The point of this ancient acclamation, which looks back to the Council of Ephesus (451) when Mary was declared to be *Theotokos,* Mother of God, is, that in that single title is involved the dogma that He to whom she gave birth is, in one Person, true God, true Man. Herein is concentrated the whole of the true doctrine about our Lord.)

The three remaining Masses from Purification to Easter, and from Easter to Pentecost, and from Pentecost to Advent, use all of them the following *Prayers:*—

Grant to us Thy servants, we pray Thee, O Lord God, ever to rejoice in health of mind and body, and, by the glorious intercession of blessed Mary ever-Virgin, both to be freed from present sorrows, and ever to rejoice in eternal happiness. By Thy good mercy, Lord, and through the intercession of blessed Mary ever-Virgin, may this offering avail us both for our present and our eternal well-being and peace. We have received, O Lord, That which helps us to salvation: grant, we pray, that we may everywhere be protected by the good-will of blessed Mary ever-Virgin, in reverence for whom we have made these offerings unto Thy Majesty.

They have the same *Introit:* the old rugged hexameters of Sedulius are abruptly finished with the resounding "in saecula saeculorum."

"Hail, thou Mother most holy, who gavest His birth to that Monarch—Who o'er heaven and earth bears rule for ever and ever": and the *Epistle* in each case is from the book of Wisdom. The reason that words written concerning the Wisdom of God can be applied to our Lady, is first, quite simply that Wisdom is, in Greek and in Latin, a feminine word; and secondly, because of the real applicability of the inspired sentences. In His Eternity, God knew the Incarnation—knew, therefore, not only Christ and His work, but the manner of His birth—knew, therefore, Mary and so to put it, reckoned with her in His eternal plan.

"From the beginning, yea before time was, was I created, and ever and for ever shall I endure, and in His holy dwelling do I serve Him. And so, in Sion was I established; yea, in the Holy City did I find my rest, and in Jerusalem my realm. Into a noble folk drove I my roots—a people whose inheritance is in my God's domain: so, 'mid the multitude of the Saints have I my home."

Glad words, alike for Mary, and for that Catholic

people of whom they are said. The *Gospel* for the first and third of these Masses recalls the words of Christ that blessed though it be to have given bodily birth to Him, blessed still more are they who "hear God's Word and keep it"—so that Mary has both blessings, who not only was His Mother according to the flesh but did indeed "keep all these sayings, pondering them in her heart" and never once was faithless. The other *Gospel* recalls her standing at Christ's Cross. The only words that have not already been used in these Masses, are in the *Gradual* of the first:—

> "Blessed and worthy of all reverence art thou, Virgin Mary, who without touch of evil word art made the Mother of our Lord. Virgin Mother of God, nor earth nor heaven can hold Him—Who for the days of His flesh narrowed His home to any heart. Alleluia. The Stem from Jesse's root doth bloom, and God is born from Maiden's womb: restored is peace, reversed our doom—God's Self now holds in thrall both Nothingness and All."

These rugged rhythms of past ages form the two parts of the *Gradual* of the first of these three Masses. The *Offertory* of the second sings: "Blessed art thou, Virgin Mary, who didst bear the Creator of all things: thou gavest birth to Him who made thee, and for ever remainest Virgin, Alleluia." In the third Mass there is nothing new.

The Missal then, while hymning with great awe Our Lady's purity, never detaches it nor any of her graces from her supreme office, the Mothering of God. Even when her arms do not yet hold her Son, she is exalted only because they *shall*. And once they do, her Child is never taken out of them. The thought of Mary must invariably and of necessity awake in us the thought of Jesus, and of the work that He, as

man, came to do for men. Our Lady's history is taken up by her special feasts, beginning with the Immaculate Conception.

The Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8). The Church, with delicate sensitiveness, puts all Mary's own gratitude into the *Introit*. Had she these very words (Is. lxi, 10) in her mind when she sang a Magnificat?

> "I rejoice, I rejoice in the Lord, and my spirit exulteth in my God. For He hath clad me in a robe of righteousness, like a bride adorned with her jewels. I will extol Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast lifted me up, and hast not suffered my enemies to have joy over me (Ps. xxix). Glory, etc. Mary's own gratitude first; then our own joy in sympathy with hers. "Blessed art thou, Mary Virgin, by the Most High God, beyond all other women on the earth. Thou art the pride of Jerusalem; thou, the joy of Israel; thou, the chief honour of our people. Alleluia, alleluia! Wholly fair art thou, O Mary: and in thee the fault of Adam is not. Alleluia! (*Gradual*).

The *Offertory* is simply the Hail Mary—never can our Lady tire of hearing that: and the *Communion:* "Magnificent things must be said of thee, O Mary, for He that is mighty hath done great things for thee."

The *Prayers* link the doctrine of the Feast with the Offering of Mass—

> O God, who through the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin didst prepare a worthy habitation for Thy Son; we pray that Thou who foreseeing the Death of the same Thy son didst preserve her from every flaw, wouldst by her intercession grant that we too may come stainless unto Thee. Accept, O Lord, the Saving Victim that on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary we do offer Thee; and grant, that even as we acknowledge that by the preparation of Thy grace she was exempt from every flaw, so we, by her intercession, may be free from every sin. May the Sacraments

we have received, O Lord, our God, repair in us the wounds made by that Sin, wherefrom Thou didst uniquely guard the Conceiving of the Blessed Virgin from any stain.

Notice how the Grace of God is what is triumphant in this privilege of Mary—grace merited by her Son, as all grace is, and foreknown in His eternity by God. That eternal vision of God's mind is what the "lesson" recalls to us, from that Wisdom-book whose use has been explained (p. 223).

"The Lord held hold of me from the beginning of His paths; before He made and created anything. From eternity I was ordained, yea, from ancient days, before the earth was made. Not yet did the deeps exist—but I already was conceived: nor yet had the founts of waters broken forth, nor yet had the mighty mountain-masses taken shape. Before the hills was I being brought forth —not yet had He made the earth, nor the rivers, nor the hinges of the world. When He was fashioning the skies, there was I: when in fixed law and scope He was digging the abysses, and was establishing the firmament above, and balancing the springs, and was setting its frontiers round the sea, and gave a law for the waters that they flow not beyond their boundaries—when thereto he added the foundations of the land. Along with Him was I, putting it all together; and day by day I found delight therein, and joyed before Him all the time—found joyance in the earth, and my delight it was to be amongst men. So now, listen to me, my children. Happy are they who keep unto my paths. Accept your lessoning; be prudent; cast it not aside. Happy the man who heareth me, and watcheth daily at my doors, and is constant at the pillar of my gateways. Who findeth me, findeth life, and from the Lord shall drink in Salvation."

Not every line of this is equally applicable to Mary: but it is good to practise our minds—if not, precisely, upon God's own vision of what He means the world to

be (for who, save He, sees that?) at least upon the thought that He *has* His vision of the world, the world's true self is what *He* sees and means: and therein are our true selves. And that world is made for, and holds together in, and has no meaning apart from, and now is ransomed by, God's Sole-Begotten Son, who to His Divine Nature has wedded our human nature, taken from that Maiden who from eternity was foreseen, fore-loved, fore-sanctified by Grace.

Nov. 15 is the PRESENTATION OF OUR LADY IN THE TEMPLE wherein tradition tells she spent her girlhood. The Mass is *Salve Sancta* (as from Pentecost to Advent, p. 00) with this *Prayer:*

> God, who didst will that the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, the Holy Spirit's shrine, should be presented as on to-day within Thy temple, grant, we pray Thee, that by her intercession, we may be ourselves presented in the temple of Thy glory. We may recall that on this day innumerable nuns, the whole world over, renew their vows. Pray for them.

The ANNUNCIATION is celebrated on March 25, and in a sense is the year's greatest feast, since it recalls the true beginning of God's Incarnate life. Its *Introit* is that of the Mary-Mass from Christmas to Purification: its *Prayers*, the Mary-prayers for Advent (p. 220); its *Epistle* is the prophecy *Ecce Virgo*; and its *Gospel* the history, of course, of the event. The *Offertory* echoes the gospel, and the *Communion* the *Epistle*. The *Gradual* and the *Tract* (for this feast falls nearly always in Lent) are from Ps. xliv.

> "Grace is poured forth upon thy lips, wherefore God hath blessed thee for ever, for thy fidelity's sake, thy gentleness, thy righteousness; and wonderfully thy power

shall lead thee on. Hearken, my daughter, and incline thine ear . . . the King hath desired thy beauty: all the great ones of the people shall bow down before thy face: princesses do thee honour. Maidens of her escort shall be led unto the King: O King, to thee shall her kindred be brought in. In gladness and in triumph shall they be brought in—in, to the Temple of the King."

Just possibly our heart may want some other words or rhythm than these ancient chants: we might have liked something more fully Christian. But again, it may be good for us to remember that all the world, even without knowing it, or knowing but in part, was "groaning and travailing together" for that which to-day is celebrated. With all the energy of your heart implore, during this Mass, that you may realise that God has become Man, and that you are "in one" with Him. Words then will matter little.

The exquisite feast of the VISITATION is on July 2. The Mass is *Salve Sancta*, with the *Prayers*:

Lavish upon Thy servants, Lord, we pray Thee, the gift of heavenly grace, so that to those for whom the Birth from the Blessed Virgin meant the beginning of salvation, the grateful celebrating of her Visitation may give yet greater peace. May the Humanity of Thy Sole-Begotten, Lord, assist us; so that He who by His birth from Mary lessened not her virginity but did consecrate it, may, in this Feast of her Visitation, both strip us of our guilt, and make our offering acceptable to Thee.

The *Post-Communion* asks in general that our Communion may imply our well-being both in this life, and in the next. Nor are the other items of this Mass peculiar, and the *Gospel* could but tell the story from St. Luke. But the *Epistle* is dramatically, almost romantically, chosen; no wonder, since it comes from

that marriage-drama that we call the Canticle, in which the Jews already saw the wedlock between God and His beloved People.

> "Lo, He is coming, speeding across the mountains, leaping across the hills. My Beloved hastening comes like the fawn, like the roe. And lo! now stands he behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattices. And hark! now speaketh my Beloved unto me: 'Rise, hasten, O my loved one, my dove, my lovely one, and come! The winter is over and gone, passed are the rains and finished. Flowers have come forth in our land; the time of pruning is come, and the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land. The fig puts forth its fruit; the vines a-flower breathe their fragrance. Rise, my love, my lovely one, and come—my dove within the crannies of the rock, in the hollows of the wall; show Me thy face—let thy voice sound in My ears—for thy voice is sweet, and beautiful thy face.'"

The almost oppressive sweetness of these words must stand symbol, for us, of that intense joy of the soul when indeed Jesus and Mary come to it and abide with it. I will also think of the Baptist who "at the voice of Mary's salutation" was sanctified—his Masses are on pp. 236 sqq.

The feast of Our Lady's Expectation, of Our Lord's birth (Dec. 18) has nothing special in its Mass.

The feasts of CHRISTMAS, of the PURIFICATION, and of THE SORROWS OF OUR LADY are to be found in their places above. THE ASSUMPTION closes the cycle of feasts concerned with our Lady's earthly history. Aug. 15. Disappointment is often expressed that this Mass has so little "special colour" in it, and many substitutes have been devised. So far, none is accepted. Certainly the *Introit* begins magnificently.

"Rejoice we all in the Lord, celebrating a festal day under the high title of Blessed Mary Virgin; in whose Assumption the Angels do rejoice and join in praising the Son of God. My heart is brimming with a noble theme—I repeat my royal hymn!"

From this well-known psalm is taken too the *Gradual,* the Alleluia-chant adding: "Up-borne is Mary into heaven: the hosts of Angels do rejoice, Alleluia!" The *Offertory* repeats the last words of the Introit-antiphon; and the *Communion,* alluding to the *Gospel,* recalls that "Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken from her for ever."

The *Epistle* is that of the Mass from Pentecost to Advent, as above (p. 223), with the following verses:

"Like a cedar upon Libanus was I lifted high; like a cypress on mount Sion: like a palm in Cades was I lifted up, and I was like the rose-gardens of Jericho. Like a lovely olive in the fields, and like a plane-tree beside the water-channels was I lifted high. Like cinnamon and scented balsam spread I forth my fragrance: like choice myrrh, I wafted forth sweet perfume."

Oriental though the imagery be, the picture can appeal to us, especially if our fancy can seize the contrast between the lovely foliage, shade and colour of the trees and the blazing arid earth of Palestine. The *Gospel* is a supreme example of the "applied" sense of Scripture. For the incident of Martha and Mary has nothing to do, after all, with Our Lady. Presumably it was chosen for the sake of the last *words:* "Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall never be taken away from her." Our joy in the Assumption is, in fact, due to its being the eternal seal set by God upon the history of Mary—that personal, public history, so to say, which began when she spoke the words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me

according to Thy word." For at that moment she accepted her immeasurable office and became God's Mother, and her Immaculate Conception and all her other graces achieved their purpose. The *Prayers* for this feast are old and stately.

> "Pardon, we pray Thee, Lord, the sins of Thy servants, that we, who cannot please Thee by acts of our own, may be saved through the intercession of the Mother of Thy Son, our Lord. May the prayer of the Mother of God succour Thy folk, O Lord, and may we experience that she, who because of her human state we know to have departed, is, in heavenly glory, interceding before Thee for us. Partakers in the heavenly table, O Lord our God, we pray Thy mercy, that we who celebrate the Assumption of the Mother of God, may by her intercession be set free from all the ills that threaten us."

There are very many other feasts of Our Lady, of which the Church has chiefly honoured that of the Rosary. Its *Introit* is that of the Assumption, with the word *Solemnity* instead of *Assumption.* Its *Epistle* is the first part of that for the Immaculate Conception; its *Gospel,* the story of the Annunciation. The Alleluia-chant of the *Gradual* cries out: "The solemn feast of the glorious Virgin Mary of the seed of Abraham, sprung from the tribe of Juda, princess of David's house." The *Offertory:* In me is every grace for thought and act, in me all hope of life and virtue. Like a rose planted beside the water-courses, I flourish. And the *Communion:* Flower forth, ye flowers, like the lily, yield ye your scent; give leaves for loveliness, and sing a hymn together, and join in praising God in His works. The *Prayers* are all straightforward. This feast is kept on the first Sunday in October. Other feasts of things connected with Our Lady are: The Miraculous Medal (Nov. 27) and

Our Lady of Mount Carmel (July 16) in so far as this commemorates the brown scapular. Feasts of her pictures are, Our Lady of Good Counsel (Apr. 26) and of Perpetual Succour (Sunday before June 25), and of Guadalupe (Dec. 2). Others, of her shrines, are Our Lady "of the Snow" (Sta. Maria Maggiore at Rome: Aug. 5); Our Lady of Lourdes (Feb. 11); Our Lady of Loreto (Dec. 10). These, in so far as they possess anything special in their Masses, easily yield up their treasures; nor need we allude to any other save that which in a sense sums them up—the feast of the "Name of Mary" on the Sunday within the Octave of the feast of her Birth. The "Name," we have seen (p. 8), denotes the entire "personality," as we say, and the feast just directs our mind towards the person of Our Lady in general, nor is the Mass constructed of any unusual elements.

The Feast of Our Lady's Espousal to St. Joseph (Jan. 23) has nothing special about its Mass.

The Birth of Our Lady is kept on Sept. 8. Its *Introit* is simply the Salve Sancta: nor are the other changeable parts of this Mass in any way special. Its *Epistle* is that of the Immaculate Conception: the only rather peculiar feature is the *Gospel*. It relates Our Lady's genealogy inasmuch as she was the spouse of Joseph with whom, legally, she was identified. This genealogy is given by St. Matthew in the form here used. This long list of names is apt to be tedious unless we take measures that it shall not be. The following idea may serve. We are not in the habit of attending much to the "Old Testament." Still, we ought to. It is the history of God's special Providence

in regard of this our world. In all that has happened, "Christ was being thought of" (Tertullian). But when Christ is thought of, Mary is thought of. For in God's plan, Christ was not to reach us otherwise than through Mary. Therefore in all this long history of the world, one thing was being led up to—He who was the "son of man," that is, human, and in the concrete, that meant, Son of Mary. Hence through this long line of ancestors, and through these ancestresses (how unlike herself), Mary was being prepared for. Now that we possess both Jesus and Mary, may we not act as though that preparation had never been! The *Prayers* are familiar:

> Impart, we pray Thee, Lord, unto Thy servants, the gift of heavenly grace, that to them for whom the Birth of the Blessed Virgin marked the beginning of salvation, the devout celebration of her Nativity may grant increase of peace. And the other prayers are customary ones.

The Feasts of Angels are those of the Apparition and of the Dedication of St. Michael, May 8 and Sept. 29—Mass is the same for each of these days; of St. Gabriel, Mar. 18, St. Raphael, Oct. 24, and of the Guardian Angels, Oct. 2. These all have the same *Introit:*

> "Bless the Lord, all ye His Angels, mighty in power, who do His word, and hearken to the voice of His bidding. O my soul, bless the Lord, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name."

Similarly, they all have the same *Communion:*

> "Bless the Lord, all ye Angels of the Lord, sing and make song to Him and exalt Him above all for ever!"

Thus these Masses make clear to us that the function of *praising God* is that which is most proper to

His heavenly court, and that on which it is wished we should concentrate attention, and in it join. We might even dare to ask that God from time to time would for a moment open our ears, that we might hear the praise that the Universe in its manifold ways is ever singing to His glory: the enormous Te Deum, Magnificat, Sanctus and Benedictus of all creation. Besides this, the service of the angels is insisted on: "are they not all ministering spirits?" (Hebr. i. 14), and does not the very word *Angel* mean "messenger"? Hence the Guardian Angels' Mass sounds this note most clearly.

> "O God, who in Thine unspeakable providence dost deign to send the holy angels to our guarding, generously grant to Thy suppliants that they may not only be ever defended by their protection but rejoice in their society for ever. Accept, O Lord, the gifts that we offer Thee for the venerating of Thy holy Angels, and mercifully grant that by their constant guardianship we may be freed from present perils and come safe to everlasting life. We have received, O Lord, the divine mysteries, rejoicing in the feast of Thy holy Angels; we pray that by their protection we may constantly be freed from the ambushes of enemies, and fortified against all adversities."

In this Mass the *Epistle* is finely taken from *Exodus* xxiii.

> "I will send My Angel to go before thee, and to guard thee in the way and to bring thee into the place that I have prepared for thee. Attend to him, and listen to his voice, nor think that he can be despised. For he will not disregard it if you sin, and My Name is upon him (God delegates authority to him). But if thou hearest his voice and do all that I say, I will be a foe to thy foes, and beat down them that would beat thee down: and my Angel shall go before thee."

The *Gospel* recalls what our Lord said about the Angels that guard children, "see ever the face of their Father in heaven"; bidding us show a reverence to children deep indeed if God Himself so loves and sees Himself reflected in their innocence as to entrust them to so superb a guardianship. The *Gradual* is from Psalm xc.

> "God hath given His angels command concerning thee, that they should guard thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall carry thee, lest ever thou strike thy foot against a stone."

The rest of this Mass echoes the angelic praises.

With this Mass that of St. Raphael, "Healer of God," may be placed. The *Epistle* recalls the story of Tobias and how the Archangel not only presented his good works and prayers to God, but healed his sight and had power against evil spirits. The *Gospel* relates the incident of the Angel's stirring up of the pool of Bethesda and the cures there worked. Round this notion the Mass is grouped.

> "O God who didst give blessed Raphael the Archangel to Tobias Thy servant, to be a companion to him in his way, grant to us too Thy servants that by his guardianship we may ever be protected, by his aid defended. We offer our sacrifice of praise to Thee, O Lord, humbly imploring Thee that, at the intervention on our behalf of the angels' intercession, Thou wouldst receive it with good will and grant it to prevail for our salvation. Deign to direct, O Lord God, holy Raphael Archangel to our aid, that he whom we believe ever to stand before Thy Majesty, may make over to Thee for Thy blessing our own scant prayers."

Aptly, the *Offertory* sings:

> "An Angel stood near the temple-altar, having a golden

censer in his hand, and much incense was given him; and the fragrant smoke went up in the sight of God."

And the same Apocalypse assures us that by "incense" the prayers of the Saints are signified.

The Mass of St. Gabriel is made up of these elements, with allusions of course to his rôle in the Annunciation; and the *Epistle* is from Daniel, where Gabriel is sent to prophesy about the Advent of the Messias. All these Angels and Archangels may be dear to us; but the Church, like the Scriptures, has always seen in St. Michael, whose very name (who is like to God?) is a challenge and a battle-cry, God's greatest warrior against evil. He is one of those few who have their names actually mentioned in the Mass other-where than in the prayers *—his *Gradual,* after repeating the *Introit,* breaks into the Alleluia-chant: "Holy Michael, Archangel, defend us in the battle, lest we perish in the terrible Judgment." In Paschal-season, it adds: "Shaken was the sea, and the earth did quake, when the archangel Michael descended from heaven." The *Epistle* is in tune with these tremendous suggestions, drawn as it is from the first Chapter of St. John's Apocalypse, and interpreting the "seven spirits" that are "before God's throne" as angelic beings, Michael one of them: the *Gospel,* on the other hand, reminds us that these mighty powers are glad to be guardians of little children. The first *Prayer* perfectly sums up this double aspect of the angels, and is alone significant:

"O God, who hast in marvellous hierarchy arranged the ministries of Angels and of men, mercifully grant, that they who ever stand before Thee, offering Thee ministry in heaven, may also guard our life upon this earth.

* Cf. the *Gradual* of the Mass for the Dead, p. 212.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST. The *Imitation* warns us not to compare Saints. Yet Our Lord's own words force us to attend to the Baptist in a unique way. He said that among men, born of women, none had arisen greater than John. Yet, He mysteriously added, "the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Certainly, one in whom is the supernatural life of grace is greater than the most refined and cultured purely human product imaginable. This no less certainly does not imply that Grace was not possessed by John the Baptist. None the less, divine as was the older Dispensation, of which John was the final flower, it was transcended by the full revelation of Christ, and by His Church in which are set as by right the very channels and, so to call it, the machinery of Grace. It remains that undoubtedly the Church's Mind is that we should offer a unique homage to the Baptist. She will not allow the name of St. Joseph himself to displace that of John. It is certainly then our business to try to adapt our minds to this. Perhaps meditation on the perfect *unselfishness* of the Baptist may help us. Impossible to develop that theme here. But reflect how John, having concentrated on himself the whole attention of the leaders of God's Chosen People, with the most perfect loyalty kept not an atom of it for himself, but deflected it towards Christ, handed over to Him even his own disciples, insisted that "one only hath the bride"—to One only do souls of men belong; yet, that though "*He* must increase, and I, diminish," the pure joy that belongs to "the friend of the Bridegroom" was his own, and "*that* my joy, is fulfilled." His Masses are two—THE NATIVITY, and the BEHEADING, June 24 and August 29.

The Birth of the Baptist. The feast has its vigil with its noble Mass. The *Prayers* of the vigil are:

> Grant, we pray Thee, Almighty God, that Thy family may proceed along the path of salvation; and, by adhering to the counsel of blessed John the Fore-Runner, may attain securely to Him whom he predicted, Jesus Christ.

The *"Silent" Prayer* has nothing special. The *Post-Communion:* May the splendid prayer of blessed John Baptist, O Lord, stay ever with us; and may he ask that He whose advent he foretold, may come to us in mercy, Jesus Christ. The *Epistle* is the most noticeable part of the rest of this Vigil-Mass. It contains that assurance given by God to Jeremias, which will be repeated in to-morrow's *Gradual.*

> "Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee; and before thou camest out from the womb, I set thee upon one side and gave thee to be a prophet to the heathen." Then said I: "A, a, a, O Lord God . . . See, I know not how to speak—I am but a child . . ." Then said the Lord unto me: "Say not: 'I am a child,' for unto all, whereto I shall send thee, thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee, thou shalt speak. Fear not their frown, for I shall be with thee."

And the promise pursues its magnificent course. The *Gradual* contains the no less splendid homage paid to the Baptist by his namesake the Evangelist. The *Introit* for the Feast is from Is. xlix.

> "From my mother's womb the Lord called me by my name. He ordained my tongue to be as a sharp sword: beneath the shelter of His hand He shielded me, and set me like a chosen arrow."

The *Gradual* begins with the words from Jeremias, and continues:

> The Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, saying: Thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the

Highest, for thou shalt go before the Face of the Lord to prepare His ways.

The combination of these words from the Song of the Baptist's father (repeated in the Communion) with what goes before, is an audacious yet successful feat. The *Prayers* are:

God, who hast made this day worshipful for us owing to the Birth of blessed John, give to Thy peoples the grace of spiritual joys, and govern the minds of all the Faithful into the paths of eternal salvation. We pile Thine altars, Lord, with gifts, celebrating with due honour *his* Birth who both proclaimed that the Saviour of the world was on His way, and pointed to Him present. May Thy Church, O Lord, drink draughts of joy from the begetting of blessed John the Baptist, by means of whom she has recognised the Maker of her own New Birth, Jesus Christ Thy Son.

The *Epistle,* from Isaias, adds a few phrases to those of the *Introit,* making it clear that the subject of God's choice was nothing less than the People of Israel itself: applied to the individual Baptist; they suggest that he sums up in himself the whole history, the whole upshot, of the People so far as it has reached—and it had in fact reached so far that after John one more step only could be taken—from the greatest among men, to the Son Himself of God.

It is hardly necessary to give details about the Mass of the Beheading, which is composed of material to be found in the various "Commons" mentioned below. "I spoke of Thy Law in the presence of kings, and was not abashed," has an obvious applicability. The *Epistle* (Jer. i) is also one relating God's encouragement to the human-wise timid prophet. And the *Post-Communion* is superb.

> "May the feast of St. John Baptist confer on us, O Lord, to rejoice that the splendid sacraments, which we venerated in their foreshadowing, have in ourselves reached actually their fruition."

That is the essence, really, of the relation of John and of his dispensation to Christianity. His baptism symbolised and foreshadowed and was the occasion of grace-giving: Christian baptism contains grace, and actually gives it.

St. Joseph. It took long for Catholic devotion to turn as it now does towards St. Joseph. It may be that St. Teresa, who proclaimed her own devotion to him, was responsible for the providential touch, so to say, which was needed to set a latent instinct acting —helped people to see what for centuries they had been looking at, namely, that in God's great family, the Church, Joseph must hold some analogous position to that which he held on earth in regard to Jesus and to Mary. The feast of March 19 is rather the feast of the man: that of the 3rd Sunday after Easter—the feast of his office—his "patronage" of the Universal Church. The Mass for March 19 may astonish us, since it is made up from Masses for Confessors who are not bishops (p. 251) and the prayers themselves have nothing special about them. The *Gospel* alone strikes a note proper to the Saint, and relates the terrible trial Joseph passed through before he understood the designs of God upon Our Lady. The Mass will "come alive" if you have previously meditated upon St. Joseph's character and experiences: but, by itself, it will provide you with no special understanding of him or his office. Yet, to my mind, this very simplicity and sobriety are in

keeping with the life of that Palestinian workingman.

The Mass of the Patronage is quite modern. Its *Introit* is:

> "Our helper and protector is the Lord: in Him shall our heart rejoice, and in His Holy Name have we hoped. Thou who rulest Israel, attend—O Thou who like a sheep dost govern Joseph."

The *Offertory* is: Praise thou the Lord, Jerusalem, for He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates and blessed thy sons within thee. The *Communion* recalls the ancestry of Joseph and his espousal to Mary. The *Gradual* is:

> Alleluia, alleluia. From whatsoever distress they call upon me, I will hear them, and will ever be their protector. Alleluia. O Joseph, keep our lives for ever pure. And 'neath thy patronage serene and sure.

The *Prayers* have nothing special in them, and while the *Gospel* ends with the tremendous affirmation that Jesus was believed to be Joseph's son, the *Epistle* relates the blessing given to the patriarch Joseph by his father, and is placed there simply because of the coincidence of name. It cannot be said that this Mass is, liturgically, either inspired or inspiring.

The Apostles. Naturally the Church gives an exalted liturgical rank to the Masses in honour of the twelve men whom Our Lord chose for the foundations of His Church. Their feasts have vigils. Their *Introit* runs:

> "I am like an olive fruitful in the House of the Lord. I put my hope in the mercy of my God—yea, I will wait

upon Thy Name, for it is good in the sight of Thy saints. Why vaunt thine iniquity, thou that art powerful in sin?"

How well this states the splendour and humility of the Apostles! twelve simple men, against the Roman empire and the world! As in most Vigil-Masses, the *Prayers* are without special colouring. The *Epistle* reminds us of the election by our Lord of those Twelve, in correspondence with the twelve tribes of the Chosen People, and ends with the magnificent declaration:

"He chose him out of all mankind. Face to face, He gave him His enactments, a law of life, and a discipline. He placed him very high, and He established for him an eternal covenant, and girt him with a righteous girdle, and crowned him with glory.

The *Gradual* recalls that while the Apostle stands solitary and lofty like a palm-tree, he shall be multiplied throughout the Lord's demesne, for the purpose of "announcing Thy mercy in the morning, Thy truth all the whole night long." The *Gospel* insists on Christ's words that not they have chosen Him, but He them, that they should *go,* and bear fruit—a fruit that should remain. And *Offertory* and *Communion* dwell on the unique glory of these twelve.

The actual Masses of Apostles contain, when the gospels offer material, references to the particular Apostle whose feast it may be, as in the case of St. Andrew (Nov. 30), St. Thomas (Dec. 31), but as a rule the *Introit* is:

"Honoured indeed in my eyes are Thy friends, O God: firmly indeed is their princedom established. Lord, Thou hast tested me, and hast thoroughly known me: Thou knowest my repose and my uprising."

But on the whole, the dignity of the apostolic Masses is so simple and undecorated, that there is no need to dwell upon their details. They reach their climax, necessarily, in the Masses of St. Peter and St. Paul, whom in her liturgy the Church will never separate. For the Roman Church has always realised that while in one sense Peter's prerogative of ruling is unique, Paul's vocation to preach is no less unique, and the two were associated irrevocably in the early well-being of the Christian Community within the City Rome. Moreover, Peter and Paul display very perfectly each in his person each of the two great aspects of the Church. The Church is essentially a Teaching and Governing Church. It has a Christ-appointed Head, namely Peter and his successors, the bishops of Rome. Peter did indeed sit quiet, ruling from Rome as still he does. Paul represents the expansive, almost explosive character of the Church—he moves about: he goes all over the known world . . . he is the ideal missionary. Hence while in the Masses of Apostles in general, you discern predominant the ideas of election —it is Christ who has elected them, not they Him— Christ who is the source of whatever they possess and do—and Christ, who, being so, ensures enormous expansion to their work, and perfect permanence—in the case of Peter and of Paul, their vocation and work and glory are more accurately and personally defined.

On the 29th of June, a truly significant and structural feast in the Church, that we ought to cultivate with special attention and love, the *Introit* refers to the miraculous escape of St. Peter from his prison. Extend this thought. That is indeed the Catholic destiny. Again and again, the forces of this world seem on the point of imprisoning, if not slaying, the

Catholic Fact—the word and work, the very existence of the Church. And always She re-emerges. "Now indeed I know that God has delivered me from the hand of Herod!" The *Epistle* relates that history; and the *Gradual,* having cried that "Thou dost make them Princes over all the earth—they shall never forget Thy Name, O Lord! And instead of ancestors, Thou hast given them children, so that the peoples shall acknowledge Thee" ends in the mighty cry that "Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my Church—Alleluia!" The *Gospel* tells the history of those last words, and the *Offertory* repeats the first words of the *Gradual,* and the *Communion,* its last words. The stately Roman *Prayer* simply asks:

> "O God, who hast consecrated this day by the martyrdom of Thine Apostles Peter and Paul, grant to Thy Church in all things to follow their precepts through whom her worship received its first beginning."

The Feast of St. Peter in Chains commemorates specially his deliverance from prison, Aug. 1, and has the same *Introit* and *Epistle* and *Gospel.* Its *Gradual* Alleluia-chant ends with the ancient hexameters: Break, at the bidding of God, the earthlier bonds that enchain us, Peter, at whose high word the portals of heaven are opened! Else, the feast has nothing special, nor has that of St. Peter's See at Antioch (Feb. 22) or of his Chair at Rome (Jan. 18).

The Masses of St. Paul have in them the same imperial splendour. Jan. 25th is that of his Conversion—a turning-point in the history of the Church herself. "I know to Whom I have trusted," sings the triumphant *Introit:*

"I know for certain that He can keep that which I have entrusted to Him, most just Judge, until that Day . . . Lord, Thou hast tested me: Thou knowest me: Thou knowest my repose and mine up-rising."

"God," cries the *Collect,* enveloping all that is in its vast sweep: "who hast taught the entire world by the preaching of Blessed Paul the Apostle, grant us, we pray, that we who celebrate to-day his Conversion, may, by his example, take our path towards Thee." And as Paul is never absent, in the Liturgy, from Peter's side, so here Peter's splendid *Collect* follows that of Paul.

"O God, who to Blessed Peter Thine Apostle didst give the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and therewith the Pontificate of Binding and of Loosing, grant that by the help of his intercession we may be freed from the entanglement of our sins."

The *Epistle* naturally tells the history of the Conversion: the *Gospel,* Our Lord's promises to those who for His sake leave all things, as indeed the Apostle did. The *Gradual* solemnly chants Paul's own great declaration concerning Peter and himself.

"He who worked within Peter unto his Apostolate, among the Jews, worked in me too in regard of the Gentiles, and they realised the grace of God that was given to me. The Grace of God was not inert within me: but ever His Grace in me remaineth. Alleluia, Alleluia! Great Saint Paul, Vessel Elect, truly worthy art thou to be extolled, who didst indeed deserve to possess the Twelfth Throne. Alleluia."

(If Lent be come instead of Alleluia and what follows)—

"Thou art a chosen vessel, holy Paul Apostle, and truly worthy that thou be extolled as Preacher of Truth, and

Teacher of the Heathen in the Truth of Faith. Through thee all nations have learned the Grace of God. Intercede for us with God, who chose thee.

The Mass of St. Paul's Special Commemoration follows immediately upon that of June 29. Save for the *Epistle,* in which Paul insists on the divine origin of his faith and of his mission, there is nothing special in it. It repeats that of his Conversion. We may trust that devotion will grow in us towards those whom Our Lord Himself chose and called "no longer servants," but His "friends," and whom the Church regards as her mightiest Princes. The Princedom of the Apostles is a thought to which the Liturgy continually recurs, and to all these heroes of the Blood Royal must our homage often go, though especially to that tremendous soul that Paul was, and to Peter from whom has followed our undying dynasty of Popes.

Feasts of Martyrs. The cultus of the Saints began, in the Catholic Church, by way of that of Martyrs. No wonder then, independently even of our Lord's words that "greater love hath no man than this—that he lay down his life for his friend"—that Martyrs' Masses are of a great richness and variety. There are Masses for a Martyr-Bishop, for a Martyr not a bishop, and an Easter version of these Masses, and yet others when several Martyrs are being commemorated. It would be needless to translate every sentence in each of these.

In the First Mass for one Martyr-Bishop, there are, strangely, no allusions to martyrdom and most of the component elements are to be found in Masses for confessors. Alone the *Collect* has a special character.

"Look down upon our weakness Almighty God; and since the weight of our own behaviour bears us down, may the glorious intercession of blessed N., Thy bishop and martyr, protect us."

The invincible courage of the Martyr flickers through the reference to our vacillations. The SECOND MASS FOR A BISHOP-MARTYR has little more that is special: its *Epistle* and *Gospel* however do insist upon the sufferings, the crosses, and the giving up of life itself that the true Christian may or must endure. I would suggest that these admirably chosen epistles and gospels be separately studied, especially those from St. Paul. And I confess that the Masses for one Martyr, not a bishop, are almost as colourless save for the continual reference to the "crown of precious stones" that God sets upon the head of His chosen ones—a text which, I think, became popular and assimilated from the very moment of St. Stephen's martyrdom, that has acted as model ever since. The *Epistle* in the second among this group of Masses (Beloved, Remember that our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, etc.) is peculiarly fine. Then come the MASSES FOR ONE MARTYR IN EASTER-TIME. And then, for MANY MARTYRS IN EASTER-TIME, in which is to be found the very splendid first chapter of St. Peter's first epistle, used *as* epistle. Finally, we have MASSES FOR MANY MARTYRS, OUTSIDE THE PASCHAL SEASON, for the first of which Ps. 78 makes a superb *Introit.*

"Lord, let the cry of the prisoner come to Thy hearing: pay back unto the foeman sevenfold into his bosom —avenge the blood of Thy saints that has been poured out. O God, the heathen have come into Thine inheritance: they have polluted Thy temple, they have made of Jerusalem a mere hovel of the fields . . ."

The Christian knows that though the body, Temple of the Holy Ghost, be destroyed, yet in the soul is God's holiest dwelling-place; and the vengeance that he asks is conversion for his foe. Splendid too is the *Gradual* in this Mass.

> "Glorious is God in His Saints: marvellous in majesty, and wonder-working. Thy right hand, O Lord, is made glorious in power—Thy right hand hath scattered the enemy."

And indeed no worse rout of Death could be imagined than that inflicted by the Martyr who has triumphed across the Red Sea of his own passion, as these words, taken from the Canticle of Moses in *Exodus*, wish us to understand. Alleluia, alleluia, continues the chant. "The bodies of the Saints are buried and in peace, but their name liveth from one generation to another." In Lent, the *Tract* reads out that:

> "They that sow in tears, in joy shall reap. They went, and as they went they wept: scattering their seed: but they shall come again in exultation, carrying their sheaves."

Fine too is the *Gradual* of the second Mass (Sapientiam):

> "Our soul, like a sparrow, hath been snatched forth from the snare of the huntsman: broken is the snare—and we, we are set free. Our help was in the Name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

Well-chosen too the verse of the *Introit* of the third Mass (Salus autem):

> "Fret not thyself over the malicious, and wax not hot against them that work iniquity."

And beautiful its *Offertory:*

> "The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no malicious torment touch them. To the eyes of the foolish they did appear to die—but they are in peace."

The MASSES FOR MARTYRS reflect thoroughly the mind of our earliest ancestors in the Faith who exulted over martyrdom. Throughout the Roman Missal, there is no whining or weakness. The Masses for the Dead will not let us off or cushion us on ill-justified complacency, and those for martyrs do not dwell on the pain and horrors that the Martyr underwent. The one thing expected of a Christian is, that he should witness to Christ, and when he does so in the supremest way, the Church acclaims him, and the humblest of her members envies him, even while thinking that precisely, maybe, because he himself could not have played so well his part, he was not offered anything so high in the great drama of the Faith.

Finally, there are Masses for women who were Martyrs, and indeed some of the very most famous of the Martyrs were women and even quite young girls, like Blandina of Lyons and Agnes of Rome, and our Canon has the names of many among them. Since however there is nothing very special in these Masses, I say what little need be said about them below.

Certain Martyrs were so famous that their Masses have special elements, sometimes of great beauty. St. Stephen (Dec. 26) has a thrillingly beautiful Mass: St. Ignatius of Antioch (Feb. 1) has for its Communion the martyr's own incomparable words—"I am Christ's grain! let me be ground by the teeth of beasts, that I may be found pure bread." The *Gradual* for St. Laur-

ence, the Roman deacon, who died by fire, has for its grand *Gradual:*

> "Thou hast tested my heart, O Lord, and in the night hast visited it. With fire hast Thou examined me, and in me no iniquity was found. Alleluia! alleluia! Good was the work done by the Levite Laurence who by the Cross's sign gave sight to the blind."

The Masses for Virgin-Martyrs too have their own special beauty here and there, but are eclipsed by the splendour of their Breviary Offices. A few Martyrs, like Thomas of Canterbury or Josaphat of Russia, find their names actually mentioned in their *Introits.*

The Masses for Confessors are allotted to bishops, to doctors (or great theologians, who may or may not be bishops) and to others. Again, their structure is simple, and special outstanding qualities are rare. It is safe to say that those for bishops have a truly Roman, senatorial stateliness, of which the essence is derived first from the royal psalms concerning David and the Messias who absorbed all priesthood into their own persons; then from the lofty conceptions of the book of Wisdom, from whose 44th and 45th chapters the thoroughly characteristic *Epistle* for the first such Mass (*Statuit*) is drawn, and then from the Roman terseness of the prayers. How simple is the *Gradual* of that Mass, and yet how forcible.

> "Behold a great High Priest, who, in his day, pleased God. No one like unto him was found, for preserving the Lord's Law. Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech."

And again, its *Offertory:*

> "I have found David, my servant. With my holy oil

have I anointed him; My hand shall support him and my arm shall strengthen him."

Stately and simple too is the *Introit* for "Doctors." "In the midst of the Church opened he his mouth, and the Lord filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and with a robe of glory He arrayed him."

The 4th chapter of St. Paul's 2nd letter to Timothy provides a perfect *Epistle.*

The Masses for Confessors who are not bishops are again so simple that they need but few words. It might be well to note how much the Missal insists on the Saints' assimilation of, brooding over, working into the substance of their soul, the Wisdom and the Law of God and again, on the love that God bears toward such men; and again, how He makes them fruitful and to reproduce themselves throughout the Church. And on the side of God's good servant, how the Church loves to insist that God has "given him his *heart's desire.*" Where else in the world, save among the Saints, does any such thing happen!

The Masses for Virgins love to repeat certain sentences which have more tenderness in them than is usual—"Come, spouse of Christ," says the *Tract* from the Mass *Loquebar:* "receive the crown that the Lord has prepared for thee for ever—He for whose love thou didst outpour thy blood." The *Gospels* fondly dwell on the flawless Pearl that Christ has found; in the often-read *Epistle* (ii Cor. x and xi), Paul's ideal for the whole Christian community—his ideal for its purity and perfect unshared loyalty—is seen as that too for Christian individual consecration. "I am jealous for you," he writes, "with a jealousy that is God's—I

have plighted you to one man, that I might present you as a pure virgin unto Christ." He goes on to say in verses not read in the Liturgy: "But I am afraid lest somehow, even as the serpent in his cunning deceived Eve, so he may corrupt your mind out of its *unmitigatedness* towards Christ." That is the aim of Catholic celibacy or purity—it is a means of keeping the heart and soul unmitigatedly Christ's own.

I know that many people, who try to use the Missal, do not wholly like these "common" Masses. Partly I fancy they do not at all care for any Old Testament phrasing: it is unfamiliar to them. But they also find that they prefer something more picturesque and varied, more personal to the Saint being celebrated, and perhaps more "sentimental." To me these ancient Masses are not unlike the Roman aqueducts that stand in heavy arches across the enormous plain. It is true that their structure is very simple, and goes on lines that you would have thought could have been invented by almost anyone; and yet they were not—no one combined straight lines and the arch quite as the Romans did. No one has ever written anything quite like a Roman Mass. Immemorial are the phrases "the Law of God is in his heart"; "The righteous man shall flourish like a palm"; "Good is it to give thanks to God, to sing praise to Thy Name, O Highest!"—and quite without recondite mysticism or elaborate devotion are those sentiments. Yet if you brood upon them, you find all you need for a profound and loyal life. They carry a simple pure religion through to you, like the dark cold water in the aqueduct. Yes: these Masses are grave, simple, very strong things, like the mighty masonry that has in its heart that pure

and springing water; and this double dignity, proper to simple and living things, moves firmly on across the centuries like those arches that bestride the tangle of grasses and the myriad charm of swift-withering flowers, and the innumerable restlessness of insects, and the tormented life of man.

In all this ancient Roman building there was a minimum of ornament perfectly suited to it, though the sheer rhythm of the arches in a sense sufficed as ornament.

Somewhat similarly, the sheer rhythm of the prayers in these Masses implies a most straightforward, simple, prudent ornamentation—they are more than the sheer laying of bricks one upon another, though even this gives so singular a beauty to old Roman work.

> "Grant, we pray Thee Almighty God, that we, who venerate the Birthday of blessed N. Thy martyr, may by his intercession be fortified in the love of Thy Name. Grant, we pray Thee, Almighty God, that, at the intercession of blessed N., Thy martyr, we may alive be freed from all bodily ills and cleansed in our minds from wrongful thoughts. Grant, we pray, O Lord Our God, that as in the commemoration of Thy Saints we find happiness in our temporal homage, so we may rejoice in seeing him for ever. O God, who didst grant to Thy people blessed N. as a minister of eternal salvation, grant, we pray, that him whom we have had as Teacher of life on earth, we may be allowed to possess as intercessor in the heavens. Satisfied by the generosity of Thy divine Gift, we pray Thee, O God our Lord, that by the intercession of blessed N., Thy virgin and martyr, we may ever live in full participation therein."

Unfortunately, our language is quite unable to render properly the Roman music, rather as Gothic makes manifest a different mind and feeling from what the Roman majesty reveals.

But besides this, you will sometimes see, in those old monuments, a sudden square of decoration—an inscription for example, in its ornate frame. These may be genuine old Roman, perfect in balance and clarity of intelligence, or again, very good renaissance imitation of the ancient original work, and sometimes, alas, an ever inferior barocco. We have already seen that the MASS OF ST. LAURENCE for example is "decorated" with personal allusions and a richer colouring: other Masses have either all their variable parts adapted to the feast and the personality of the Saint whose day it is. These sometimes are terse and very happy, fully alive and vibrant. The prayer for St. Jerome Aemilian (July 20) is perhaps the best of the constellation of beautiful and personal prayers proper to the group of feasts occurring about then.

> "O God, Father of mercies, through the merits and intercession of blessed Jerome whom Thou didst will to be helper and father of orphans, grant that we may faithfully preserve the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we are named, and are, Thy sons."

The prayer for St. Augustine of England (May 28), though very long, is stately:

> "O God, who by the miracles and preaching of blessed Augustine Thy confessor and bishop didst deign to illumine by the true light of faith the peoples of England, grant, that by his intervention, the hearts of wanderers may return to the unity of Thy faith, and that we may be in harmony with Thy will." St. Louis of France, Aug. 25: "O God, who didst transfer blessed Louis Thy Confessor from an earthly kingdom to the glory of the heavenly one, we pray, through his merits and intercession, that Thou wouldst make us fellow-sharers with the King of kings, Jesus Christ Thy Son."

The prayers proper to St. Francis (Oct. 4; Sept. 17)

are of poignant beauty, and I cannot but love that for instance belonging to St. Ignatius Loyola (July 31):

> "O God, who for the promoting of the greater glory of Thy Name, didst through blessed Ignatius fortify the Church Militant with new auxiliaries, grant that by his help and example fighting upon earth, we may attain to be crowned with him in heaven."

St. Aloysius Gonzaga (June 21):

> "O God, the Apportioner of heavenly gifts, who in the angel-like young man Aloysius didst unite amazing innocence of life with penance no less marvellous, grant to his merits and prayers that we, who have not followed him in his innocence, may imitate his penance."

His other two prayers have too a sort of rainbow quality that fills them with colour and dew. But rather as it is one thing to write in Latin, and quite a different thing to *write Latin*, so in the best of these later prayers there is seldom a spontaneous jet of liturgical prayer, but rather, instructive allusions, research for telling adjectives, and a multiplicity of requests and even synonyms. This is not a critical or literary book, and I have said even this much in the hopes that it may help readers not to pass over the older Masses as "dry," and to seek earnestly even in the newer ones for the point of the prayer—what I ask, and why I ask it with special hopes to-day.

The Mass for the recently instituted Feast of Christus Rex, Christ as Universal King, may reasonably be inserted in conclusion: it is kept on the first Sunday of Oct.

> *Introit.* Apoc. v, 12, 6: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power and divinity and wisdom and strength and honour. To Him the glory and the rule

for ever and ever. Ps. lxxi, 1. O God, entrust Thy Judgment to the King—yea, Thy Justice to the Royal Son.

The Introit-antiphon means, that our Lord, crucified and risen, has the intrinsic right that we should ascribe to Him all these topics for praise as His. We do not *confer* these attributes upon Him.

The *Epistle* (Col. i, 12-20) develops this idea.

Brethren, we thank God, who has caused us to be worthy to take our part in the inheritance of the saints in light, who has snatched us out of the power of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love. In Him we possess our redemption, through His blood, the remission of our sins. He is the Image of God the Invisible—first-begotten before all created things—for in Him are established all things both in heaven and earth, things seen and things unseen, be they thrones or dominations, principalities or powers—for by means of Him and in Him they all of them were created. And Himself is before all of them, and in Him do all things hold together. And Himself is the Head of the Body, that is, the Church—He who is the Origin, and, the First-begotten from the dead, so that in all things it be He who holds the Primacy. For in Him it has pleased God that the whole Plenitude should be made to dwell, and by means of Him to reconcile all things unto Him, making peace through the Blood of His Cross among all things, be they things of earth, or of heaven—in Him, in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

The majestic mysticism of this passage is not really hard to assimilate if we recall that God always intended to raise us humans to a supernatural state, linking us to Himself in knowledge and love through His eternal Son. How that union would have been effected had we not sinned, we cannot be sure. We know how it has been done. None the less, it remains that anyone who *leaves out* the Wisdom and the Word of God, the

Second Person of the Holy Trinity, can never get a true view of what the Universe was, in God's mind, *meant to be* and of that towards which it is even now being drawn. *Through* God's Eternal Wisdom and Word, His Son, all things were made: apart from Him and what He is planning and achieving for them, they do not "hold together"—they are fragmentary, chaotic. In Himself, therefore, God sees the vision of the world as He means it to be: through His Son He created it: even though we have sinned, still through Jesus Christ is He drawing it into that perfect harmony and supernatural unity which had ever been, and ever is, intended for it.

The *Gradual* (Ps. lxxi, 8, 11) is:

> He shall be King from sea to sea, from the River unto the ends of the earth. And all the kings of the earth shall worship Him; all the heathen shall serve Him. Alleluia, alleluia. (Dan. vii, 14.) His power is an eternal power that shall never be taken from Him: and His reign, a reign that shall never be destroyed.
>
> The *Offertory* (Ps. ii, 8) is: Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and for Thy possession, the ends of all the earth.
>
> The *Communion* (Ps. xxviii, 10, 11): The Lord shall sit throned King for ever and ever: the Lord shall bless His people with peace.

(In the *Gradual*, the northern and southern seas are meant; the *river* is the Euphrates, commonly thought of as the eastward limit of the world; and the "ends of the earth" means its westward boundary.)

The *Gospel* (John xviii, 33-37) lifts all this Old Testament symbolism to the Christian level by recalling the sense in which our Lord admitted to Pilate that He was indeed a King. And the *Prayers* and *Preface* naturally echo this:

Almighty, eternal God, who didst will to establish all things in Thy dear Son, the universal King, mercifully grant that all the heathen races, torn apart by the wound of sin, may be subdued to His most gentle rule. We offer to Thee, O Lord, the Virtue that reconciles mankind, that He whom in this sacrifice we offer up, may grant to all the Peoples the gifts of unity and peace, Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Lord. We have been granted, Lord, the food that makes immortal: grant that we who are proud to fight beneath the standard of Christ the King, may for ever reign with Him upon His heavenly throne. Truly right is it and just . . . that we should thank Thee . . . Eternal God, Who with the oil of gladness didst anoint Thy Sole-Begotten Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, to be eternal Priest, and King of the Universe, that by offering Himself upon the altar of the Cross as a stainless sacrifice of peace, He might accomplish the mystery of the redeeming of mankind, and, when all creations should have been submitted to His rule, might offer to Thine immeasurable Majesty a Kingdom eternal and universal, a kingdom of truth and of life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace. And therefore . . .

This magnificent Mass, therefore, sums up the mind alike of the Church and of her worship-book, the Missal. God has not willed to do anything whatsoever in regard of this universe and of our race therein, save through His Son. Through His Eternal Wisdom He created it: in that Wisdom He governs it and leads it to what it is to be: through that same Eternal Son, now made Man, He redeemed it when it sinned; and by union with Christ, and through Him with God the Father Eternal, and in no other way, is its blissful consummation to be reached. Christ then is at the Head of all that is. We have not only to acknowledge Him as supreme in our regard as individuals, so that we agree that we think Truth only when we think as He

thinks, and do what is right only when we do what pleases Him; but even as He holds sovereign rights over the intelligence and behaviour of each man, so does He over social life, whether that of the family, or of any group within each nation, or of a nation, or of that community of nations, as it should be, that constructs the human race. Little by little, may be achieved that due order which makes harmony first within each individual self when it obeys Christ, and then, within those wider frontiers that are proper to Christendom. This process will not be completed until, as the upshot of His "mighty energising" Christ has submitted all things to Himself, as Himself is All *in* All. For this consummation, His representative, His Vicar upon earth, has bidden the world, once more, to pray with all its heart.

* * * * *

The first point, then, about the Missal is the obvious one that it is a *Mass-book*. Some books that people use at Mass make them treat that Service as a sort of preparation for Communion such almost as one might carry through were Communion being given *out* of Mass. Mass is not just a number of prayers accidentally surrounding a Communion. As for High Mass, many people, I understand, do almost anything rather than co-operate in the progress of the Liturgy. They read all sorts of prayer-books and even books which have nothing to do with Mass exactly, but which are spiritual in general. This is surely a great pity.

Such persons have been heard to declare that they find the Missal dull. The sobriety of the Roman Rite is certainly marked. But I would like to think that that sobriety was appreciated and indeed *preferred* by

Catholic worshippers. Ecstatic ardours are not to be had for the asking, and their *imitation*, which is, like most imitations, fairly easily come by, is also, *the better it is*, the more harmful because the more deceptive. At least, the Roman Missal does not flatter anyone. It makes you acknowledge sin: it keeps asking, so frankly as to be almost crude about it, that sin and the affection for sin, may be purged out of you. It then asks again and again that you may be preserved for the future. It lulls you in no kind of false security. It keeps telling you that you have been *very ill*, and must still take "great care" of yourself. However, it also tells you—with a sudden intensification of its mood—that it wants to transfer your centre of vital gravity right out of this visible world into the invisible. It keeps checking you, no doubt, by its insistence on ordinary good behaviour. But it unflinchingly reminds you of that, whereof "good behaviour" is but the this-world expression. An "eternal life," a "divine working," are certainly to be translated into virtuous actions, but what after all is the most correct exterior behaviour compared to that Life which they live and eternally shall live, who are "in Christ"? "May this His earthly substance confer on us that which is divine." There is certainly no soaring height of Christian mysticism to which the Missal does not open doors of vision.

The Mass is punctuated by the little phrase: *Dominus Vobiscum*. "The Lord be with you." I leave to one side that "*Dominus Vobiscum*" which the priest says just before he ascends to the altar, and also that which belongs to the Last Gospel; for both of these form part, we saw, of his private preparation and thanksgiving for Mass. Apart from these, then, the

Priest wishes seven times the Lord's presence with the worshipper—the plenitude of His powerful presence.

The first *Dominus Vobiscum* occurs just before the Prayer of the Mass. The Lord is with us, to be asked for what we need. He possesses it. He wishes to give it. But He wishes to be asked for it. Let us then do so. Let us never go to Mass without wanting to ask something quite definite, which may be anything from a temporal detail, to a greater love of God. But the Church in no way sanctions any notion such as that things happen automatically, nor that spiritual travesty of union with God's will—not-wanting anything in particular, even virtue, holiness or salvation. We have, then, to *ask*.

The second *Dominus Vobiscum* is spoken just before the Gospel. Christ is with us to *teach*. Not only does the body of the Mass contain, you may say, the full Christian doctrine, from Creation, through Original Sin and Redemption, to the Beatific Vision, but its epistles and gospels both contain not only such instruction, and also challenge us to seek them in their context so as to learn much more. It were a pity to *submit* merely to these readings from inspired Scripture: we need to masticate them and digest and assimilate them, and derive growth from them.

The third *Dominus Vobiscum* is uttered just before the Offertory. Christ means to be with us to *receive*. The least generous soul ought to find it intolerable to take everything and give nothing. Anyway, giving is essential in the Mass. What else is it, save an Offering? And again and again, it is not a private offering of the priest's. It is "my sacrifice *and yours*." So we will try to come to Mass anxious to offer Christ, and with Him and in Him ourselves and whatever special

sacrifice or hope or "intention" we arrive equipped with.

Dominus Vobiscum is said for the fourth time when the Preface is about to begin. Here thought of self must begin to be laid aside. Let us concentrate on this—that Christ is coming, and leave it to Him to recollect that it is to *us* that He is coming. If indeed we think of self, it must be no more than to ensure that we give *Him* His welcome.

With a certain shock we realise that during the Canon *Dominus Vobiscum* is not said at all. Yet, I am counting the "*Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum*" as one of the seven announcements of the Presence of the Lord. "The Peace of the Lord be ever with you." But it is not a wish merely: it is a statement. The Lord *is* sacramentally with us, and as such we salute Him. In pagan days, the "pax deum"—the "peace" of the gods meant more than mere absence of hostility. It meant a sort of established family well-being. At Mass, this Peace is so proclaimed as to imply a real established union between Christ and us His brothers. As such, let us accept it.

The Presence of God is a sixth time declared immediately after the Communion. Whether or no we have received Him sacramentally, we shall surely have received Him "spiritually" and by desire. May this presence then be ours, and fully so. And last of all, the *Dominus Vobiscum* is prayed before the final prayer. May His Presence be with us, so as to remain.

To each of these entreaties, the people answer: "And with thy spirit," that is, "and with *thee*, O priest!" Could we but be sure that the congregation really meant this reply, uttered through the lips of server or of choir! What strength for the poor priest, since

Christ could not but admit this collective seven-fold prayer! At least the writer of this book, wishing day by day, and now as he is about to finish it, the Presence of the Lord to all who need Him, and to the readers and users, please God, of these pages, very earnestly begs that the *"et cum spiritu tuo"* may be said on his account, and often said.

More and more, then, must it become our desire actively to co-operate in every part of Mass. We shall wish to join in that Preparation at the Altar's foot which the Priest (albeit his whole life must, in a measure, group its whole self around the Offering of Mass) feels to be so necessary; which the Church too feels to be so necessary that she has actually incorporated it *in* Mass. We will not dream of recalling that she does not *command* us to be present at it—we shall be grateful for its purifying existence and desire in a special and separate way to be personally involved in it. During the first half of the Mass, up to the Offertory, we shall try definitely to realise that we want to receive mercy, and that we want to offer Glory—Kyrie! Gloria! We shall accumulate, moreover, the desires of our heart on all subjects, knowing that nothing is too personal and intimate, too concrete or (as they say) material, for us to ask for, since, in her Collects, the Church asks for all such things. Still, we shall try to be in sympathy with what the Church all the world over is asking on each several Sunday, and join our little voice to the great silent thunder of her own. And we will try hard to realise how much we need to learn, and hope to pick up if but a crumb that falls from God's Table whereon is spread, for our minds, the rich banquet of His written Word. And in the Creed, we shall not only profess that we believe, but bring to a

head our gratitude for the gift of Faith with its ramifying and ever-enduring consequences. Thus we shall have accumulated within ourselves all those Purposes for which Sacrifice is offered, that is, Adoration, Expiation, Thanksgiving, and Petition.

During the Offertory, we shall collect all this material and present it along with the Bread and the Wine, as, precisely, material for Sacrifice.* We shall mentally heap it upon the Altar, together with our selves and the actual Oblations of the Mass, definitely intending that it should be *multiplied* into That which is the essence of the Mass-Offering, namely Jesus Christ. And thenceforward, we shall try to concentrate our mind on Him. We shall do so, not in isolation, but along with this priest, this congregation, all persons whom we have at heart, all the country, all the world, and along with Purgatory and with heaven. The Kingdom must be thought of corporately along with its King. And when the narrative of the Institution of the Eucharist has put the final touch to our endeavour to be *doing* in this Mass what *Christ* bade us do and what Himself He did, and when the Consecration has taken place, let us keep saying, in what words I care not, but meaning and willing: "I offer—I offer—*all* This—to Thee!" And our Communion, even "spiritual," consummates the organic part we shall thus have taken in the Offering of Mass. So when we

*I hope enough has been said in this book to rid us of that unfortunate sense which the word *sacrifice* has acquired—unfortunate because so very limited—i.e., 'doing without' something. 'Doing without' a thing may sometimes be a consequence of 'offering' a thing. But in offering Christ, in no sense do we 'do without' Christ or give Him up; we acquire Him; and moreover, offer Him in order to get rid, certainly, of the effects of our sins, but also in gratitude for what we have got, and in order to get many a thing more. And a sacrifice of Praise certainly does not impoverish us but enriches us.

leave the church, neither we leave Christ, nor does Christ leave us. Christ in us, we in Christ, go forth to our Christian and Christianising work in a world that has no hope save in Him "through Whom, and along with Whom, and in Whom" all things exist, and grow, and give all glory unto God.

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